260 14 26 1390 R.G.L

T: One Step forward
Two Steps Back

A: Lenin

ಪರಾಮರ್ಶನ ಗ್ರಂಥ
Acc.No: 107831
ಅಕ್ಷರ ಗ್ರಂಥಾಲಯ
ಕನ್ನಡ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಹಂಪಿ
ವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯ

1947

329.947
LEN

PROGRESS Publishers

ಗ್ರಂಥಾಲಯ

ಕನ್ನಡ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಹಂಪಿ

ವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯ.

ಅಕ್ಷರ ಗ್ರಂಥಾಲಯ
ಕನ್ನಡ ವಿ.ವಿ., ಹಂಪಿ.

ಎಸ್. ಎಸ್. ಹಿರೇಮಠ
ನಿವೃತ್ತ ಪ್ರಾಂಶುಪಾಲರು
ಬೆಳಗಾವಿ

07
14

One Step Forward,
Two Steps Back

2 P 2 5

Kriya Prakashana (P) Ltd.
Shobha Lodge Complex
Gandhinagar, Bangalore-9

Workers of All Countries, Unite!

Lenin

One Step Forward, Two Steps Back

(The Crisis in Our Party)[1]

ಎಸ್.ಎಸ್. ಹಿರೇಮಠ
ನಿವೃತ್ತ ಹ್ರಾಂತುಪಾಲರು
ಬೆಳಗಾವಿ

AKSHARA GRANTHALAYA
ACC.NO. 107831

Progress Publishers • Moscow

329.947
LEN

Publishers' Note

This translation of V. I. Lenin's *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* has been made from the text given in the *Collected Works* of V. I. Lenin, Vol. 7, Fourth Russian Edition, prepared by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the C.C. C.P.S.U.

Corrections have been made in accordance with the Fifth Russian Edition of the *Collected Works.*

First printing 1947
Second printing 1950
Third printing 1951
Fourth printing 1965
Fifth printing 1969
Sixth printing 1973
Seventh printing 1978

107831

Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Л $\frac{10102\text{-}014}{014(01)\text{-}78}$ 70-78

CONTENTS

Preface 7

a) The Preparations for the Congress 11
b) Significance of the Various Groupings at the Congress . 13
c) Beginning of the Congress. The Organising Committee Incident 16
d) Dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* Group 25
e) The Equality of Languages Incident 28
f) The Agrarian Programme 35
g) The Party Rules. Comrade Martov's Draft 43
h) Discussion on Centralism *Prior* to the Split Among the *Iskra*-ists 51
i) Paragraph One of the Rules 55
j) Innocent Victims of a False Accusation of Opportunism 77
k) Continuation of the Debate on the Rules. Composition of the Council 88
l) Conclusion of the Debate on the Rules. Co-operation to the Central Bodies. Withdrawal of the *Rabocheye Dyelo* Delegates 93
m) The Elections. End of the Congress 107
n) General Picture of the Struggle at the Congress. The Revolutionary and Opportunist Wings of the Party 133
o) After the Congress. Two Methods of Struggle 146
p) Little Annoyances Should Not Stand in the Way of a Big Pleasure 164
q) The New *Iskra*. Opportunism in Questions of Organisation 175
r) A Few Words on Dialectics. Two Revolutions . . . 205

Appendix. The Incident of Comrade Gusev and Comrade Deutsch 211

Notes 221

PREFACE

When a prolonged, stubborn and heated struggle is in progress, there usually begin to emerge after a time the central and fundamental points at issue, upon the decision of which the ultimate outcome of the campaign depends, and in comparison with which all the minor and petty episodes of the struggle recede more and more into the background.

That, too, is how matters stand in the struggle within our Party, which for six months now has been riveting the attention of all members of the Party. And precisely because in the present outline of the whole struggle I have had to refer to many details which are of infinitesimal interest, and to many squabbles which at bottom are of no interest whatever, I should like from the very outset to draw the reader's attention to two really central and fundamental points, points which are of tremendous interest, of undoubted historical significance, and which are the most urgent political questions confronting our Party today.

The first question is that of the political significance of the division of our Party into "majority" and "minority" which took shape at the Second Party Congress and pushed all previous divisions among Russian Social-Democrats far into the background.

The second question is that of the significance in principle of the new *Iskra*'s position on organisational questions, insofar as this position is really based on principle.

The first question concerns the starting-point of the struggle in our Party, its source, its causes, and its fun-

damental political character. The second question concerns the ultimate outcome of the struggle, its finale, the sum-total of principles that results from adding up all that pertains to the realm of principle and subtracting all that pertains to the realm of squabbling. The answer to the first question is obtained by analysing the struggle at the Party Congress; the answer to the second, by analysing what is new in the principles of the new *Iskra*. Both these analyses, which make up nine-tenths of my pamphlet, lead to the conclusion that the "majority" is the revolutionary, and the "minority" the opportunist wing of our Party; the disagreements that divide the two wings at the present time for the most part concern, not questions of programme or tactics, but only organisational questions; the new system of views that emerges the more clearly in the new *Iskra* the more it tries to lend profundity to its position, and the more that position becomes cleared of squabbles about co-optation, is opportunism in matters of organisation.

The principal shortcoming of the existing literature on the crisis in our Party is, as far as the study and elucidation of facts is concerned, the almost complete absence of an analysis of the minutes of the Party Congress; and as far as the elucidation of fundamental principles of organisation is concerned, the failure to analyse the connection which unquestionably exists between the basic error committed by Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod in their formulation of Paragraph 1 of the Rules and their defence of that formulation, on the one hand, and the whole "system" (insofar as one can speak here of a system) of *Iskra*'s present principles of organisation, on the other. The present editors of *Iskra* apparently do not even notice this connection, although the importance of the controversy over Paragraph 1 has been referred to again and again in the literature of the "majority". As a matter of fact, Comrade Axelrod and Comrade Martov are now only deepening, developing and extending their initial error with regard to Paragraph 1. As a matter of fact, the entire position of the opportunists in organisational questions already began to be revealed in the controversy over Paragraph 1: their advocacy of a diffuse, not strongly welded, Party organisation; their hostility to the idea (the "bureaucratic" idea) of building

the Party from the top downwards, starting from the Party Congress and the bodies set up by it; their tendency to proceed from the bottom upwards, allowing every professor, every high-school student and "every striker" to declare himself a member of the Party; their hostility to the "formalism" which demands that a Party member should belong to one of the organisations recognised by the Party; their leaning towards the mentality of the bourgeois intellectual, who is only prepared to "accept organisational relations platonically"; their penchant for opportunist profundity and for anarchistic phrases; their tendency towards autonomism as against centralism—in a word, all that is now blossoming so luxuriantly in the new *Iskra*, and is helping more and more to reveal fully and graphically the initial error.

As for the minutes of the Party Congress, the truly undeserved neglect of them can only be explained by the fact that our controversies have been cluttered by squabbles, and possibly by the fact that these minutes contain too large an amount of too unpalatable truth. The minutes of the Party Congress present a picture of the actual state of affairs in our Party that is unique of its kind and unparalleled for its accuracy, completeness, comprehensiveness, richness and authenticity; a picture of views, sentiments and plans drawn by the participants in the movement themselves; a picture of the political shades existing in the Party, showing their relative strength, their mutual relations and their struggles. It is the minutes of the Party Congress, and they alone, that show us how far we have really succeeded in making a clean sweep of the survivals of the old, purely circle ties and substituting for them a single great party tie. It is the duty of every Party member who wishes to take an intelligent share in the affairs of his Party to make a careful study of our Party Congress. I say study advisedly, for merely to read the mass of raw material contained in the minutes is not enough to obtain a picture of the Congress. Only by careful and independent study can one reach (as one should) a stage where the brief digests of the speeches, the dry extracts from the debates, the petty skirmishes over minor (seemingly minor) issues will combine to form one whole, enabling the Party member to conjure up the living figure of each prominent

speaker and to obtain a full idea of the political complexion of each group of delegates to the Party Congress. If the writer of these lines only succeeds in stimulating the reader to make a broad and independent study of the minutes of the Party Congress, he will feel that his work was not done in vain.

One more word to the opponents of Social-Democracy. They gloat and grimace over our disputes; they will, of course, try to pick isolated passages from my pamphlet, which deals with the failings and shortcomings of our Party, and to use them for their own ends. The Russian Social-Democrats are already steeled enough in battle not to be perturbed by these pinpricks and to continue, in spite of them, their work of self-criticism and ruthless exposure of their own shortcomings, which will unquestionably and inevitably be overcome as the working-class movement grows. As for our opponents, let them try to give us a picture of the *true* state of affairs in their own "parties" even remotely approximating that given by the minutes of our Second Congress!

May 1904 *N. Lenin*

a) The Preparations for the Congress

There is a saying that everyone is entitled to curse his judges for twenty-four hours. Our Party Congress, like any congress of any party, was also the judge of certain persons, who laid claim to the position of leaders but who met with discomfiture. Today these representatives of the "minority" are, with a naïveté verging on the pathetic, "cursing their judges" and doing their best to discredit the Congress, to belittle its importance and authority. This striving has been expressed most vividly, perhaps, in an article in *Iskra*, No. 57, by "Practical Worker",[2] who feels outraged at the idea of the Congress being a sovereign "divinity". This is so characteristic a trait of the new *Iskra* that it cannot be passed over in silence. The editors, the majority of whom were *rejected* by the Congress, continue, on the one hand, to call themselves a "Party" editorial board, while, on the other, they accept with open arms people who declare that the Congress was not divine. Charming, is it not? To be sure, gentlemen, the Congress was not divine; but what must we think of people who begin to "blackguard" the Congress *after* they have met with defeat at it?

For indeed, let us recall the main facts in the history of the preparations for the Congress.

Iskra[3] declared at the very outset, in its announcement of publication in 1900,* that before we could unite, lines of demarcation must be drawn. *Iskra* endeavoured to make the Conference of 1902[4] a private meeting and not

---

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 351-56.—*Ed.*

a Party Congress.* *Iskra* acted with extreme caution in the summer and autumn of 1902 when it re-established the Organising Committee elected at that conference. At last the work of demarcation was finished—as we all acknowledged. The Organising Committee was constituted at the very end of 1902. *Iskra* welcomed its firm establishment, and in an *editorial* article in its 32nd issue declared that the convocation of a Party Congress was a *most urgent* and pressing necessity.** Thus, the last thing we can be accused of is having been hasty in convening the Second Congress. We were, in fact, guided by the maxim: measure your cloth seven times before you cut it; and we had every moral right to expect that after the cloth had been cut our comrades would not start complaining and measuring it all over again.

The Organising Committee drew up very precise (formalistic and bureaucratic, those would say who are now using these words to cover up their political spinelessness) Regulations for the Second Congress, got them passed by all the committees, and finally endorsed them, stipulating among other things, in Point 18, that "all decisions of the Congress and all the elections it carries out are decisions of the Party and binding on all Party organisations. They cannot be challenged by anyone on any pretext whatever and can be rescinded or amended only by the next Party Congress."*** How innocent in themselves, are they not, are these words, accepted at the time without a murmur, as something axiomatic; yet how strange they sound today—like a verdict against the "minority"! Why was this point included? Merely as a formality? Of course not. This provision seemed necessary, and was indeed necessary, because the Party consisted of a number of isolated and independent groups, which might refuse to recognise the Congress. This provision in fact expressed the *free will* of all the revolutionaries (which is now being talked about so much, and so irrelevantly, the term "free" being euphemistically applied to what really deserves the epithet "capricious"). It was equivalent to a *word of honour* mutually pledged

---

* See Minutes of the Second Congress, p. 20.

** See "Announcement of the Formation of an 'Organising Committee'" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 6. p. 307).—*Ed.*

*** See Minutes of the Second Congress, pp. 22-23 and 380.

by all the Russian Social-Democrats. It was intended to guarantee that all the tremendous effort, danger and expense entailed by the Congress should not be in vain, that the Congress should not be turned into a farce. It in advance qualified any refusal to recognise the decisions and *elections* at the Congress as a *breach of faith.*

Who is it, then, that the new *Iskra* is scoffing at when it makes the new discovery that the Congress was not divine and its decisions are not sacrosanct? Does that discovery imply "new views on organisation", or only new attempts to cover up old track?

b) Significance of the Various Groupings at the Congress

Thus, the Congress was called after the most careful preparation and on the basis of the fullest representation. The general recognition that its composition was correct and its decisions *absolutely* binding found expression also in the statement of the chairman (Minutes, p. 54) after the Congress had been constituted.

What was the principal task of the Congress? To create a *real* party on the basis of the principles and organisational ideas that had been advanced and elaborated by *Iskra.* That this was the direction in which the Congress had to work was predetermined by the three years' activities of *Iskra* and by the recognition of the latter by the majority of the committees. *Iskra*'s programme and trend were to become the programme and trend of the Party; *Iskra*'s organisational plans were to be embodied in the Rules of Organisation of the Party. But it goes without saying that this could not be achieved without a struggle: since the Congress was so highly representative, the participants included organisations which had vigorously fought *Iskra* (the Bund[5] and *Rabocheye Dyelo*[6]) and organisations which, while verbally recognising *Iskra* as the leading organ, actually pursued plans of their own and were unstable in matters of principle (the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group[7] and delegates from some of the committees who were closely associated with it). Under these circumstances, the Congress could not but become an *arena of struggle for the victory of the "Iskra" trend.*

That it did become such an arena will at once be apparent to all who peruse its minutes with any degree of attention. Our task now is to trace in detail the principal groupings revealed at the Congress on various issues and to reconstruct, on the basis of the precise data of the minutes, the political complexion of each of the main groups. What precisely were these groups, trends and shades which, at the Congress, were to unite under the guidance of *Iskra* into a single party?—that is what we must show by analysing the debates and the voting. The elucidation of this is of cardinal importance both for a study of what our Social-Democrats really are and for an understanding of the causes of the divergence among them. That is why, in my speech at the League Congress[8] and in my letter to the editors of the new *Iskra,* I gave prime place to an analysis of the various groupings. My opponents of the "minority" (headed by Martov) utterly failed to grasp the substance of the question. At the League Congress they confined themselves to corrections of detail, trying to "vindicate" themselves from the charge of having swung towards opportunism, but not even attempting to counter my picture of the groupings at the Congress by drawing *any different one.* Now Martov tries in *Iskra* (No. 56) to represent every attempt clearly to delimit the various political groups at the Congress as mere "circle politics". Strong language, Comrade Martov! But the strong language of the new *Iskra* has this peculiar quality: one has only to reproduce all the stages of our divergence, from the Congress onwards, for all this strong language to turn *completely and primarily* against the present editorial board. Take a look at yourselves, you so-called Party editors who talk about circle politics!

Martov now finds the facts of our struggle at the Congress so unpleasant that he tries to slur over them altogether. "An *Iskra*-ist," he says, "is one who, at the Party Congress and prior to it, expressed his complete solidarity with *Iskra,* advocated its programme and its views on organisation and supported its organisational policy. There were over forty such *Iskra*-ists at the Congress—that was the number of votes cast for *Iskra*'s programme and for the resolution adopting *Iskra* as the Central Organ of the Party." Open the Congress Minutes, and you will find that the programme was adopted by the votes

of *all* (p. 233) except Akimov, who abstained. Thus, Comrade Martov wants to assure us that the Bundists, and Brouckère, and Martynov *demonstrated* their "complete solidarity" with *Iskra* and *advocated* its views on organisation! This is ridiculous. The fact that *after* the Congress *all* who took part became equal members of the Party (and not even all, for the Bundists had withdrawn) is here jumbled with the question of the grouping that evoked the struggle *at* the Congress. Instead of a study of the *elements* that went to make up the "majority" and the "minority" after the Congress, we get the official phrase, "recognised the programme"!

Take the voting on the adoption of *Iskra* as the Central Organ. You will see that it was Martynov—whom Comrade Martov, with a courage worthy of a better cause, now credits with having advocated *Iskra*'s organisational views and organisational policy—who insisted on separating the two parts of the resolution: the bare adoption of *Iskra* as the Central Organ, and the recognition of its services. When the first part of the resolution (recognising the services of *Iskra,* expressing *solidarity* with it) was put to the vote, *only thirty-five votes* were cast in favour; there were two votes against (Akimov and Brouckère) and eleven abstentions (Martynov, the five Bundists and the five votes of the editorial board: the two votes each of Martov and myself and Plekhanov's one). Consequently, the anti-*Iskra* group (five Bundists and three *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists) is quite apparent in this instance also, one most advantageous to Martov's present views and chosen by himself. Take the voting on the second part of the resolution—adopting *Iskra* as the Central Organ without any statement of motives or expression of solidarity (Minutes, p. 147): forty-four votes *in favour,* which the Martov of today classes as *Iskra*-ist. The total number of votes to be cast was fifty-one; subtracting the five votes of the editors, who abstained, we get forty-six; two voted *against* (Akimov and Brouckère); consequently, the remaining forty-four include *all five Bundists.* And so, the Bundists at the Congress "expressed complete solidarity with *Iskra*"—this is how official history is written by the official *Iskra*! Running ahead somewhat, we will explain to the reader the real reasons for this official truth: the present editorial board of *Iskra* could and would have been a real Party edito-

rial board (and not a quasi-Party one, as it is today) *if the Bundists and the "Rabocheye Dyelo"-ists had not withdrawn from the Congress;* that is why these trusty guardians of the present, so-called Party editorial board had to be proclaimed *Iskra*-ists. But I shall speak of this in greater detail later.

The next question is: if the Congress was a struggle between the *Iskra*-ist and the anti-*Iskra*-ist elements, were there no intermediate, unstable elements who vacillated between the two? Anyone at all familiar with our Party and with the picture generally presented by congresses of every kind will be inclined *a priori* to answer the question in the affirmative. Comrade Martov is now very reluctant to recall these unstable elements, so he represents the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group and the delegates who gravitated towards it as typical *Iskra*-ists, and our differences with them as paltry and unimportant. Fortunately, we now have before us the complete text of the minutes and are able to answer the question—a question of fact, of course—on the basis of documentary evidence. What we said above about the general grouping at the Congress does not, of course, claim to answer the question, but only to present it correctly.

Without an analysis of the political groupings, without having a picture of the Congress as a struggle between definite shades, the divergence between us cannot be understood at all. Martov's attempt to gloss over the different shades by ranking even the Bundists with the *Iskra*-ists is simply an evasion of the question. Even *a priori*, on the basis of the history of the Russian Social-Democratic movement before the Congress, three main groups are to be noted (for subsequent verification and detailed study): the *Iskra*-ists, the anti-*Iskra*-ists, and the unstable, vacillating, wavering elements.

c) Beginning of the Congress. The Organising Committee Incident

The most convenient way to analyse the debates and the voting is to take them in the order of the Congress sittings, so as successively to note the political shades as they became more and more apparent. Only when absolutely necessary will departures from the chronological order be

made for the purpose of considering together closely allied questions or similar groupings. For the sake of impartiality, we shall endeavour to mention *all* the more important votes, omitting, of course, the innumerable votes on minor issues, which took up an inordinate amount of time at our Congress (owing partly to our inexperience and inefficiency in dividing the material between the commissions and the plenary sittings, and partly to quibbling which bordered on obsruction).

The first question to evoke a debate which began to reveal differences of shades was whether first place should be given (on the Congress "order of business") to the item: "Position of the Bund in the Party" (Minutes, pp. 29-33). From the standpoint of the *Iskra*-ists, which was advocated by Plekhanov, Martov, Trotsky, and myself, there could be no doubt on this score. The Bund's withdrawal from the Party strikingly bore out our view: if the Bund refused to go our way and accept the principles of organisation which the majority of the Party shared with *Iskra*, it was useless and senseless to "make believe" that we were going the same way and only drag out the Congress (as the Bundists did drag it out). The matter had already been fully clarified in our literature, and it was apparent to any at all thoughtful Party member that all that remained was to put the question frankly, and bluntly and honestly make the choice: autonomy (in which case we go the same way), or federation (in which case our ways part).

Evasive in their entire policy, the Bundists wanted to be evasive here too and postpone the matter. They were joined by Comrade Akimov, who, evidently on behalf of all the followers of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, at once brought up the differences with *Iskra* over questions of organisation (Minutes, p. 31). The Bund and *Rabocheye Dyelo* were supported by Comrade Makhov (representing the two votes of the Nikolayev Committee—which shortly before had expressed its solidarity with *Iskra!)*. To Comrade Makhov the matter was altogether unclear, and another "sore spot", he considered, was "the question of a democratic system or, on the contrary [mark this!], centralism"—exactly like the majority of our present "Party" editorial board, who at the Congress had not yet noticed this "sore spot"!

Thus the *Iskra*-ists were opposed by the Bund, *Rabocheye Dyelo* and Comrade Makhov, who together controlled the ten votes which were cast against us (p. 33). *Thirty votes* were cast *in favour*—this is the figure, as we shall see later, around which the votes of the *Iskra*-ists often fluctuated. Eleven abstained, apparently not taking the side of either of the contending "parties". It is interesting to note that when we took the vote on Paragraph 2 of the Rules of the Bund (it was the rejection of this Paragraph 2 that caused the Bund to withdraw from the Party), the votes in favour of it and the abstentions also amounted to ten (Minutes, p. 289), the abstainers being the three *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists (Brouckère, Martynov, and Akimov) and Comrade Makhov. Clearly, the grouping in the vote on the *place* of the Bund item on the agenda was *not fortuitous.* Clearly, all these comrades differed with *Iskra* not only on the technical question of the order of discussion, but *in essence as well.* In the case of *Rabocheye Dyelo,* this difference in essence is clear to everyone, while Comrade Makhov gave an inimitable description of his attitude in the speech he made on the withdrawal of the Bund (Minutes, pp. 289—90). It is worth while dwelling on this speech. Comrade Makhov said that after the resolution rejecting federation, "the position of the Bund in the R.S.D.L.P. ceased to be for me a question of principle and became a question of practical politics in relation to an historically-evolved national organisation". "Here," the speaker continued, "I could not but take into account all the consequences that might follow from our vote, and would therefore have voted for Paragraph 2 in its entirety." Comrade Makhov has admirably imbibed the spirit of "practical politics": in principle he had *already* rejected federation, and *therefore* in practice *he would have voted* for including in the Rules a point that signified federation! And this "practical" comrade explained his profound position of principle in the following words: "But [the famous Shchedrin' "but"!] since my voting one way or the other would only have significance in principle [!!] and could not be of any practical importance, in view of the almost unanimous vote of all the other Congress delegates, I preferred to abstain in order to bring out in principle [God preserve us from such principles!] the difference between my position on this question and the position of the

Bund delegates, who voted in favour. Conversely, I would have voted in favour if the Bund delegates had abstained, as they had at first insisted." Can you make head or tail of it? A man of principle abstains from loudly saying "Yes" because practically it is useless when everybody else says "No".

After the vote on the place of the Bund item on the agenda, the question of the Borba group[9] cropped up at the Congress; it too led to an extremely interesting grouping and was closely bound up with the "sorest" point at the Congress, namely, the personal composition of the central bodies. The committee appointed to determine the composition of the Congress pronounced against inviting the Borba group, in accordance with a *twice-adopted* decision of the Organising Committee (see Minutes, pp. 383 and 375) and the report of *the latter's representatives on this committee* (p. 35).

Thereupon Comrade Egorov, *a member of the Organising Committee,* declared that "the question of Borba" (mark, of Borba, not of some particular member of it) was "new to him", and demanded an adjournment. How a question on which the Organising Committee had twice taken a decision could be new to a member of the Organising Committee remains a mystery. During the adjournment the Organising Committee held a meeting (Minutes, p. 40), attended by such of its members as happened to be at the Congress (several members of the Organising Committee, old members of the *Iskra* organisation, were not at the Congress).* Then began a debate about Borba. The *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists spoke in favour (Martynov, Akimov, and Brouckère—pp. 36-38), the *Iskra*-ists (Pavlovich, Sorokin, Lange, Trotsky, Martov, and others)—against. Again the Congress split up into the groupings with which we are already familiar. The struggle over Borba was a stubborn one, and Comrade Martov made a very circumstantial (p. 38) and "militant" speech, in which he rightly referred to "inequality of representation" of the groups in Russia and abroad, and said that it would hardly be "well" to allow a foreign group any "privilege" (gold-

* Concerning this meeting, see the "Letter" of Pavlovich[10], who was a member of the Organising Committee and who before the Congress was *unanimously* elected as the editorial board's trusted representative, its seventh member (League Minutes, p. 44).

ಎಸ್. ಎಸ್. ಹಿರೇಮಠ
ನಿವೃತ್ತ ಪ್ರಾಧ್ಯಾಪಕರು
ಬೆಳಗಾವಿ

en words, particularly edifying today, in the light of the events since the Congress!), and that we should not encourage "the organisational chaos in the Party that was characterised by a disunity not justified by any considerations of principle" (one right in the eye for. . . the "minority" at our Party Congress!). Except for the followers of *Rabocheye Dyelo, nobody* came out openly and with reasoned motives in favour of Borba until the list of speakers was closed (p. 40). It should be said in fairness to Comrade Akimov and his friends that they at least did not wriggle and hide, but frankly advocated their line, frankly said what they wanted.

After the list of speakers had been closed, when it was already out of order to speak *on the issue itself,* Comrade Egorov "insistently demanded that a decision just adopted by the Organising Committee be heard." It is not surprising that the delegates were outraged at this manoeuvre, and Comrade Plekhanov, the chairman, expressed his "astonishment that Comrade Egorov should insist upon his demand". One thing or the other, one would think: either take an open and definite stand before the whole Congress on the question at issue, or say nothing at all. But to allow the list of speakers to be closed and then, under the guise of a "reply to the debate", confront the Congress with a *new* decision of the Organising Committee on the very subject that had been under discussion, was like a stab in the back!

When the sitting was resumed after dinner, the Bureau, still in perplexity, decided to waive "formalities" and resort to the last method, adopted at congresses only in extreme cases, viz., "comradely explanation". The spokesman of the Organising Committee, Popov, announced the committee's decision, which had been adopted by all its members against one, Pavlovich (p. 43), and which recommended the Congress to invite Ryazanov.

Pavlovich declared that he had challenged and continued to challenge the lawfulness of the Organising Committee meeting, and that the Committee's new decision "*contradicts its earlier decision*". This statement caused an uproar. Comrade Egorov, also an Organising Committee member and a member of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group, evaded answering on the actual point in question and tried to make the central issue one of discipline. He claimed that

Comrade Pavlovich had violated Party discipline (!), for, having heard his protest, the Organising Committee had decided "not to lay Pavlovich's dissenting opinion before the Congress". The debate shifted to the question of Party discipline, and Plekhanov, amid the loud applause of the delegates, explained for the edification of Comrade Egorov that "*we have no such thing as binding instructions*" (p. 42; cf. p. 379, Regulations for the Congress, Point 7: "The powers of delegates must not be restricted by binding instructions. In the exercise of their powers, delegates are absolutely free and independent"). "The Congress is the supreme Party authority", and, consequently, he violates Party discipline and the Congress Regulations who in any way restricts any delegate in taking *directly* to the Congress *any* question of Party life whatsoever. The issue thus came down to this: circles or a party? Were the rights of delegates to be restricted at the Congress in the name of the imaginary rights or rules of the various bodies and circles, or were *all* lower bodies and old groups to be *completely*, and not nominally but actually, disbanded in face of the Congress, pending the creation of genuinely Party official institutions? The reader will already see from this how profoundly important from the standpoint of principle was this dispute at the very outset (the third sitting) of this Congress whose purpose was the actual restoration of the Party. Focused in this dispute, as it were, was the conflict between the old circles and small groups (such as *Yuzhny Rabochy)* and the renascent Party. And the anti-*Iskra* groups at once revealed themselves: the Bundist Abramson, Comrade Martynov, that ardent ally of the present *Iskra* editorial board, and our friend Comrade Makhov all sided with Egorov and the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group against Pavlovich. Comrade Martynov, who now vies with Martov and Axelrod in sporting "democracy" in organisation, even cited the example of ... the army, where an appeal to a superior authority can only be made through a lower one!! The true meaning of this "compact" anti-*Iskra* opposition was quite clear to everyone who was present at the Congress or who had carefully followed the internal history of our Party prior to the Congress. It was the purpose of the opposition (perhaps not always realised by all of its representatives, and sometimes pursued by force of inertia) to guard the independ-

ence, individualism and parochial interests of the small, petty groups from being swallowed up in the broad Party that was being built on the *Iskra* principles.

It was precisely from this angle that the question was approached by Comrade Martov, who had not yet joined forces with Martynov. Comrade Martov vigorously took the field, and rightly so, against those whose "notion of Party discipline does not go beyond a revolutionary's duty to the particular group of a *lower* order to which he belongs". "No *compulsory* [Martov's italics] grouping can be tolerated within a united Party," he explained to the champions of the circle mentality, not foreseeing what a flail these words would be for his own political conduct at the end of the Congress and after. . . . A compulsory grouping cannot be tolerated in the case of the Organising Committee, but can quite well be tolerated in the case of the editorial board. Martov condemns a compulsory grouping when he looks at it from the centre, but Martov defends it the moment he finds himself dissatisfied with the composition of the centre. . . .

It is interesting to note that in his speech Comrade Martov laid particular stress not only on Comrade Egorov's "profound error", but also on the political instability the Organising Committee had displayed. "A recommendation has been submitted on behalf of the Organising Committee," he exclaimed in just indignation, "which *runs counter* to the committee report [based, we will add, on the report of members of the Organising Committee—p. 43, Koltsov's remarks] and *to the Organising Committee's own earlier recommendations.*" (My italics.) As we see, *at that time,* before his "swing-over", Martov clearly realised that substituting Ryazanov for Borba in no way removed the utter contradictoriness and inconsistency of the Organising Committee's actions (Party members may learn from the League Congress Minutes, p. 57, how Martov conceived the matter after his swing-over). Martov did not confine himself then to analysing the issue of discipline; he bluntly asked the Organising Committee: "What new circumstance has arisen to necessitate the *change*?" (My italics.) And, indeed, when the Organising Committee made its recommendation, it did not even have the courage to defend its opinion openly, as Akimov and the others did. Martov denies this (League Minutes, p. 56),

but whoever reads the minutes of the Congress will see that he is mistaken. Popov, in submitting the Organising Committee recommendation, *did not say a word* about the motives (Party Congress Minutes, p. 41). Egorov shifted the issue to one of discipline, and all he said on the question itself was: "The Organising Committee may have had new reasons [but whether it did, and what those new reasons were, is unknown]; it could have forgotten to nominate somebody, and so on. [This "and so on" was the speaker's sole refuge, for the Organising Committee could not have *forgotten* about Borba, which it had discussed twice before the Congress and once in the committee.] The Organising Committee did not adopt this decision because it had changed its attitude towards the Borba group, but because it wants to remove unnecessary rocks in the path of the Party's future central organisation at the very outset of its activities." This is not a reason, but an evasion of a reason. Every sincere Social-Democrat (and we do not entertain the least doubt about the sincerity of any Congress delegate) is concerned to remove what *he considers* to be sunken rocks, and to remove them by *those methods* which *he considers* advisable. Giving reasons means explicitly stating and explaining one's view of things, and not making shift with truisms. And they *could not* give a reason without "changing their attitude towards Borba", because in its earlier and contrary decisions the Organising Committee had also been concerned to remove sunken rocks, but it had then regarded the very opposite as "rocks". And Comrade Martov very severely and very rightly attacked this argument, saying that it was "petty" and inspired by a wish to "*burke the issue*", and advising the Organising Committee "*not to be afraid of what people will say*". These words characterise perfectly the essential nature of the political shade which played so large a part at the Congress and which is distinguished precisely by its want of independence, its pettiness, its lack of a line of its own, its fear of what people will say, its constant vacillation between the two definite sides, its fear of plainly stating its *credo*—in a word, by all the features of a "Marsh".*

* There are people in our Party today who are horrified when they hear this word, and raise an outcry about uncomradely methods of controversy. A strange perversion of sensibility due to... a misapplied sense of official form! There is scarcely a political party

A consequence of this political spinelessness of the unstable group was, incidentally, that *no one* except the Bundist Yudin (p. 53) did put before the Congress a resolution to invite one of the members of the Borba group. Yudin's resolution received five votes—all Bundists, apparently: the vacillating elements had changed sides again! How large was the vote of the middle group is shown approximately by the voting on the resolutions of Koltsov and Yudin on this question: the *Iskra*-ist received thirty-two votes (p. 47), the Bundist received sixteen, that is, in addition to the eight anti-*Iskra*-ist votes, the two votes of Comrade Makhov (cf. p. 46), the four votes of the members of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group, and two others. We shall show in a moment that this alignment can by no means be regarded as accidental; but first let us briefly note Martov's *present* opinion of this Organising Committee incident. Martov maintained at the League that "Pavlovich and others fanned passions". One has only to consult the Congress Minutes to see that the longest, most heated and sharpest speeches against Borba and the Organising Committee were delivered by Martov himself. By trying to lay the "blame" on Pavlovich he only demonstrates his own instability: it was Pavlovich he helped to elect prior to the Congress as the seventh member of the editorial board; at the Congress he fully associated himself with Pavlovich (p. 44) against Egorov; but afterwards, having suffered defeat at the hands of Pavlovich, he began to accuse him of "fanning passions". This is ludicrous.

Martov waxes ironical in *Iskra* (No. 56) over the importance that was attached to whether X or Y should be invited. But again the irony turns against Martov, for it was this Organising Committee incident that started the dispute over such an "important" question as inviting X or Y on to the Central Committee or the Central Organ. It is unseemly to measure with two different yardsticks, depending on whether the matter concerns *your own*

acquainted with internal struggles that has managed to do without this term, by which the unstable elements who vacillate between the contending sides have always been designated. Even the Germans, who know how to keep their internal struggles within very definite bounds indeed, are not offended by the word *versumpft* (sunk in the marsh—*Ed.*), are not horrified, and do not display ridiculous official prudery.

"group of a lower order" (relative to the Party) or *someone else's*. This is precisely a philistine and circle, not a Party attitude. A simple comparison of Martov's speech at the League (p. 57) with his speech at the Congress (p. 44) sufficiently demonstrates this. "I cannot understand," Martov said, *inter alia*, at the League, "how people can insist on calling themselves *Iskra*-ists and at the same time be ashamed of being *Iskra*-ists." A strange failure to understand difference between "calling oneself" and "being"—between word and deed. Martov himself, at the Congress, *called himself* an opponent of compulsory groupings, yet, after the Congress, came to *be* a supporter of them. . . .

d) Dissolution of the YUZHNY RABOCHY Group

The alignment of the delegates over the Organising Committee question may perhaps seem accidental. But such an opinion would be wrong, and in order to dispel it we shall depart from the chronological order and at once examine an incident which occurred at the end of the Congress, but which was very closely connected with the one just discussed. This incident was the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group. The organisational trend of *Iskra*—complete amalgamation of the Party forces and removal of the chaos dividing them—came into conflict here with the interests of *one* of the groups, which had done useful work when there was no real party, but which had become superfluous now that the work was being centralised. From the standpoint of circle interests, the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group was entitled no less than the old *Iskra* editorial board to lay claim to "continuity" and inviolability. But in the interests of the Party, it was its duty to submit to the transfer of its forces to "the appropriate Party organisations (p. 313, end of resolution adopted by the Congress). From the standpoint of circle interests and "philistinism", the dissolution of a useful group, which no more desired it than did the old *Iskra* editorial board, could not but seem a "ticklish matter" (the expression used by Comrade Rusov and Comrade Deutsch). But from the standpoint of the interests of the Party, its dissolution, its "assimilation" in the Party (Gusev's expres-

sion), was essential. The *Yuzhny Rabochy* group bluntly declared that it "did not deem it necessary" to proclaim itself dissolved and demanded that "the Congress definitely pronounce its opinion", and pronounce it "immediately: yes or no". The *Yuzhny Rabochy* group openly invoked the same "continuity" as the old *Iskra* editorial board began to invoke... after it was dissolved! "Although we are all individually members of one Party," Comrade Egorov said, "it nevertheless consists of a number of organisations, with which we have to reckon as *historical entities*.... If such an organisation *is not detrimental to the Party, there is no need to dissolve it.*"

Thus an important question of *principle* was quite definitely raised, and all the *Iskra*-ists—inasmuch as their own circle interests had not yet come to the forefront—took a decisive stand against the unstable elements (the Bundists and two of the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists had already withdrawn from the Congress; they would undoubtedly have been heart and soul in favour of "reckoning with historical entities"). The result of the vote was *thirty-one for,* five against and five abstentions (the four votes of the members of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group and one other, that of Byelov, most likely, judging by his earlier pronouncements, p. 308). A group of *ten votes* distinctly opposed to *Iskra*'s consistent organisational plan and defending the circle spirit as against the party spirit can be quite definitely discerned here. During the debate the *Iskra*-ists presented the question precisely from the standpoint of principle (see Lange's speech, p. 315), opposing parochial amateurishness and disunity, refusing to pay heed to the "sympathies" of individual organisations, and plainly declaring that "if the comrades of *Yuzhny Rabochy* had adhered more strictly to principle earlier, a year or two ago, the unity of the Party and the triumph of the programme principles we have sanctioned here would have been achieved sooner". Orlov, Gusev, Lyadov, Muravyov, Rusov, Pavlovich, Glebov, and Gorin all spoke in this strain. And far from protesting against these definite and repeated references made at the Congress to the lack of principle in the policy and "line" of *Yuzhny Rabochy*, of Makhov and of others, far from making any reservation on this score, the *Iskra*-ists of the "minority", in the person of Deutsch, vigorously associated themselves with these

views, condemned "chaos", and welcomed the "blunt way the question was put" (p. 315) by that very same Comrade Rusov who, *at this same sitting*, had the audacity—oh, horror!—to "bluntly put" the question of the old editorial board too on a purely Party basis (p. 325).

On the part of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group the proposal to dissolve it evoked violent indignation, traces of which are to be found in the minutes (it should not be forgotten that the minutes offer only a pale reflection of the debates, for they do not give the full speeches, but only very condensed summaries and extracts). Comrade Egorov even described as a "lie" the bare mention of the *Rabochaya Mysl* group[11] alongside of *Yuzhny Rabochy*—a characteristic sample of the attitude that prevailed at the Congress towards consistent Economism. Even much later, at the 37th sitting, Egorov spoke of the dissolution of *Yuzhny Rabochy* with the utmost irritation (p. 356), requesting to have it recorded in the minutes that during the discussion on *Yuzhny Rabochy* the members of the group had not been asked either about publication funds or about control by the Central Organ and the Central Committee. Comrade Popov hinted, during the debate on *Yuzhny Rabochy*, at a compact majority having predetermined the fate of the group. "*Now*," he said (p. 316), "*after the speeches of Comrades Gusev and Orlov, everything is clear.*" The meaning of these words is unmistakable: now, after the *Iskra*-ists had stated their opinion and moved a resolution, everything was clear, i.e., it was clear that *Yuzhny Rabochy* would be dissolved, against its own wishes. Here the *Yuzhny Rabochy* spokesman himself drew a distinction between the *Iskra*-ists (and, moreover, *Iskra*-ists like Gusev and Orlov) and his own supporters, as representing different "lines" of organisational policy. And when the present-day *Iskra* represents the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group (and Makhov too, most likely?) as "typical *Iskra*-ists", it only demonstrates that the new editorial board has forgotten the most important (from this group's standpoint) events of the Congress and is anxious to cover up the evidence showing what elements went to form what is known as the "minority".

Unfortunately, the question of a popular periodical was not discussed at the Congress. It was very actively discussed by all the *Iskra*-ists both before the Congress

and during the Congress itself, outside the sittings, and they agreed that it would be highly irrational at this moment in the Party's life to launch such a publication or convert any of the existing ones for the purpose. The anti-*Iskra*-ists expressed the opposite opinion at the Congress; so did the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group in their report; and the fact that a motion to this effect, with ten signatures, was not tabled can only be attributed to chance, or to a disinclination to raise a "hopeless" issue.

e) The Equality of Languages Incident

Let us return to the chronological order of the Congress sittings.

We have now convincingly seen that even before the Congress proceeded to discuss its actual business, there was clearly revealed not only a perfectly definite group of anti-*Iskra*-ists (eight votes), but also a group of intermediate and unstable elements prepared to support the eight anti-*Iskra*-ists and increase their votes to roughly sixteen or eighteen.

The question of the position of the Bund in the Party, which was discussed at the Congress in extreme, excessive detail, reduced itself to deciding about the principle, while its practical decision was postponed until the discussion on organisation. Since the points involved had been given quite a lot of space in the press prior to the Congress, the discussion at the Congress produced relatively little that was new. It must, however, be mentioned that the supporters of *Rabocheye Dyelo* (Martynov, Akimov, and Brouckère), while agreeing with Martov's resolution, made the reservation that they found it inadequate and disagreed with the conclusions drawn from it (pp. 69, 73, 83 and 86).

After discussing the position of the Bund, the Congress passed on to the programme. This discussion centred mainly around amendments of detail which present but slight interest. The opposition of the anti-*Iskra*-ists on matters of principle found expression only in Comrade Martynov's onslaught on the famous presentation of the question of spontaneity and consciousness. Martynov was, of course, backed by the Bundists and *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists

to a man. The unsoundness of his objections was pointed out, among others, by Martov and Plekhanov. It should be noted as a curiosity that the *Iskra* editorial board (on second thoughts, apparently) have now gone over to Martynov's side and are saying the opposite of what they said at the Congress![12] Presumably, this is in accordance with the celebrated principle of "continuity".... It only remains for us to wait until the editorial board have thoroughly cleared up the question and explain to us just how far they agree with Martynov, on what points exactly, and since when. Meanwhile, we only ask: has anyone ever seen a *party* organ whose editorial board said after a congress the very opposite of what they had said at the congress?

Passing over the arguments about the adoption of *Iskra* as the Central Organ (we dealt with that above) and the beginning of the debate on the Rules (which it will be more convenient to examine in connection with the whole discussion of the Rules), let us consider the shades of principle revealed during the discussion of the programme. First of all let us note one detail of a highly characteristic nature, namely, the debate on proportional representation. Comrade Egorov of *Yuzhny Rabochy* advocated the inclusion of this point in the programme, and did so in a way that called forth the justified remark from Posadovsky (an *Iskra*-ist of the minority) that there was a "serious difference of opinion". "There can be no doubt," said Comrade Posadovsky, "that we do not agree on the following fundamental question: *should we subordinate our future policy to certain fundamental democratic principles and attribute absolute value to them,* or should all democratic principles be exclusively subordinated to the interests of our Party? I am decidedly in favour of the latter." Plekhanov "fully associated himself" with Posadovsky, objecting in even more definite and emphatic terms to "the absolute value of democratic principles" and to regarding them "abstractly". "Hypothetically," he said, "a case is conceivable where we Social-Democrats would oppose universal suffrage. There was a time when the bourgeoisie of the Italian republics deprived members of the nobility of political rights. The revolutionary proletariat may restrict the political rights of the upper classes in the same way as the upper classes used to restrict its

political rights." Plekhanov's speech was greeted with applause and *hissing*, and when Plekhanov protested against somebody's *Zwischenruf*,* "You should not hiss," and told the comrades not to restrain their demonstrations, Comrade Egorov got up and said: "Since such speeches call forth applause, I am obliged to hiss." Together with Comrade Goldblatt (a Bund delegate), Comrade Egorov challenged the views of Posadovsky and Plekhanov. Unfortunately, the debate was closed, and this question that had cropped up in it immediately vanished from the scene. But it is useless for Comrade Martov to attempt now to belittle or even altogether deny its significance by saying at the League Congress: "These words [Plekhanov's] aroused the indignation of some of the delegates; this could easily have been avoided if Comrade Plekhanov had added that it was of course impossible to imagine so tragic a situation as that the proletariat, in order to consolidate its victory, should have to trample on such political rights as freedom of the press.... *(Plekhanov: 'Merci.')*" (League Minutes, p. 58.) This interpretation *directly* contradicts Comrade Posadovsky's categorical statement *at the Congress* about a "serious difference of opinion" and disagreement on a "fundamental question". On this fundamental question, all the *Iskra*-ists at the Congress *opposed* the spokesmen of the anti-*Iskra* "Right" (Goldblatt) and of the Congress "Centre" (Egorov). This is a fact, and one may safely assert that if the "Centre" (I hope this word will shock the "official" supporters of mildness less than any other...) had had occasion to speak "*without restraint*" (through the mouth of Comrade Egorov or Makhov) on this or on analogous questions, the serious difference of opinion would have been revealed at once.

It was revealed even more distinctly over the matter of "equality of languages" (Minutes, pp. 171 et seq.). On this point it was not so much the debate that was so eloquent, but the voting: counting up the times a vote was taken, we get the incredible number of *sixteen*! Over what? Over whether it was enough to stipulate in the programme the equality of all citizens irrespective of sex, etc., *and language*, or whether it was necessary to stipulate "freedom of language", or "equality of languages". Comrade

* Interjection from the floor.—*Ed.*

Martov characterised this episode fairly accurately at the League Congress when he said that "a trifling dispute over the formulation of one point of the programme became a matter of principle because half the Congress was prepared to overthrow the Programme Committee." Precisely.* The immediate cause of the conflict was indeed trifling, yet it did become a matter of *principle* and consequently assumed terribly bitter forms, even to the point of attempts to "*overthrow*" the Programme Committee, of suspecting people of a desire to "*mislead the Congress*" (as Egorov suspected Martov!), and of personal remarks of the most. . . abusive kind (p. 178). Even Comrade Popov "expressed regret that mere trifles had given rise to *such an atmosphere*" (my italics, p. 182) as prevailed during the course of three sittings (the 16th, 17th and 18th).

All these expressions very definitely and categorically point to the extremely important fact that the atmosphere of "suspicion" and of the most bitter forms of conflict ("overthrowing")—for which later, at the League Congress, the *Iskra*-ist majority were held responsible!—actually arose *long before we split into a majority and minority.* I repeat, this is a fact of enormous importance, a fundamental fact, and failure to understand it leads a great many people to very thoughtless conclusions about the majority at the end of the Congress having been artificial. From the present point of view of Comrade Martov, who asserts that nine-tenths of the Congress delegates

* Martov added: "On this occasion much harm was done by Plekhanov's witticism about asses." (When the question of freedom of language was being discussed, a Bundist, I think it was, mentioned stud farms among other institutions, whereupon Plekhanov said in a loud undertone: "Horses don't talk, but asses sometimes do.") I cannot, of course, see anything particularly mild, accommodating, tactful or flexible about this witticism. But I find it strange that Martov, who admitted that the dispute became a *matter of principle,* made absolutely no attempt to analyse what this principle was and what shades of opinion found expression here, but confined himself to talking about the "harmfulness" of witticisms. This is indeed a bureaucratic and formalistic attitude! It is true that "much harm was done at the Congress" by cutting witticisms, levelled not only at the Bundists, but also at those whom the Bundists sometimes supported and even saved from defeat. However, once you admit that the incident involved principles, you cannot confine yourself to phrases about the "impermissibility" (League Minutes, p. 58) of certain witticisms.

were *Iskra*-ists, the fact that "mere trifles", a "trivial" cause, could give rise to a conflict which became a "matter of principle" and nearly led to the overthrow of a Congress commission is absolutely inexplicable and absurd. It would be ridiculous to evade this *fact* with lamentations and regrets about "harmful" witticisms. No cutting witticisms could have made the conflict a matter of *principle*; it could become that only because of the character of the political groupings at the Congress. It was not cutting remarks and witticisms that gave rise to the conflict—they were only a *symptom* of the fact that the Congress political grouping itself harboured a "contradiction", that it harboured all the makings of a conflict, that it harboured an internal heterogeneity which burst forth with immanent force at the least cause, *even the most trifling*.

On the other hand, from the point of view from which I regard the Congress, and which I deem it my duty to uphold as a definite political interpretation of the events, even though this interpretation may seem offensive to some—from this point of view the desperately acute conflict of *principle* that arose from a "trifling" cause is quite explicable and inevitable. Since a struggle between the *Iskra*-ists and the anti-*Iskra*-ists went on *all the time* at our Congress, since between them stood unstable elements, and since the latter, together with the anti-*Iskra*-ists, controlled one-third of the votes (8+10=18, out of 51, according to my calculation, an approximate one, of course), it is perfectly clear and natural that *any falling away from the "Iskra"-ists of even a small minority* created the possibility of a victory for the anti-*Iskra* trend and therefore evoked a "frenzied" struggle. This was not the result of improper cutting remarks and attacks, but of the political combination. It was not cutting remarks that gave rise to the political conflict; it was the existence of a political conflict in the very grouping at the Congress that gave rise to cutting remarks and attacks—this contrast expresses the cardinal disagreement in principle between Martov and myself in appraising the political significance of the Congress and its results.

In all, there were during the Congress three major cases of a small number of *Iskra*-ists falling away from the majority—over the equality of languages question, over Paragraph 1 of the Rules, and over the elections—and

in all three cases a fierce struggle ensued, finally leading to the severe crisis we have in the Party today. For a political understanding of this crisis and this struggle, we must not confine ourselves to phrases about the impermissibility of witticisms, but must examine the political grouping of the shades that clashed at the Congress. The "equality of languages" incident is therefore doubly interesting as far as ascertaining the causes of the divergence is concerned, for here Martov was (still was!) an *Iskra*-ist and fought the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Centre" harder perhaps than anybody else.

The war opened with an argument between Comrade Martov and Comrade Lieber, the leader of the Bundists (pp. 171-72). Martov argued that the demand for "equality of citizens" was enough. "Freedom of language" was rejected, but "equality of languages" was forthwith proposed, and Comrade Egorov joined Lieber in the fray. Martov declared that it was *fetishism* "when speakers insist that nationalities are equal and transfer inequality to the sphere of language, whereas the question should be examined from just the opposite angle: inequality of nationalities exists, and one of its expressions is that people belonging to certain nations are deprived of the right to use their mother tongue" (p. 172). There Martov was absolutely right. The totally baseless attempt of Lieber and Egorov to insist on the correctness of their formulation and make out that we were unwilling or unable to uphold the principle of equality of nationalities was indeed a sort of fetishism. Actually, they were, like "fetish-worshippers", defending the word and not the principle, acting not from fear of committing an error of principle, but from fear of what people might say. This shaky mentality (what if "others" blame us for this?)—which we already noted in connection with the Organising Committee incident—was quite clearly displayed here by our entire "Centre". Another of its spokesmen, the Mining Area delegate Lvov, who stood close to *Yuzhny Rabochy*, declared that "the question of the suppression of languages which has been raised by the border districts is a very serious one. It is important to include a point on language in our programme and thus obviate any possibility of the Social-Democrats being suspected of Russifying tendencies". A remarkable explanation of

the "seriousness" of the question. It is very serious *because* possible suspicions on the part of the border districts must be obviated! The speaker says absolutely nothing on the substance of the question, he does not rebut the charge of fetishism but entirely confirms it, for he shows a complete lack of arguments of his own and merely talks about what the border districts may say. Everything they *may* say will be *untrue*—he is told. But instead of examining whether it is true or not, he replies: "*They may suspect.*"

Such a presentation of the question, coupled with the claim that it is serious and important, does indeed raise an issue of principle, but by no means the one the Liebers, Egorovs, and Lvovs would discern in it. The principle involved is: should we leave it to the organisations and members of the Party to apply the general and fundamental theses of the programme to their specific conditions, and to develop them for the purpose of such application, or are we, merely out of fear of suspicion, to fill the programme with petty details, minutiae, repetitions, and casuistry? The principle involved is: how can Social-Democrats discern ("suspect") in a fight against casuistry an attempt to restrict elementary democratic rights and liberties? When are we going to wean ourselves at last from this fetishist worship of casuistry?—that was the thought that occurred to us when watching this struggle over "languages".

The grouping of the delegates in this struggle is made particularly clear by the abundant roll-call votes. There were as many as three. All the time the *Iskra* core was solidly opposed by the anti-*Iskra*-ists (eight votes) and, with very slight fluctuations, by the whole Centre (Makhov, Lvov, Egorov, Popov, Medvedev, Ivanov, Tsaryov, and Byelov—only the last two vacillated at first, now abstaining, now voting with us, and it was only during the third vote that their position became fully defined). Of the *Iskra*-ists, several fell away—chiefly the Caucasians (three with six votes)—and thanks to this the "fetishist" trend ultimately gained the upper hand. During the third vote, when the followers of both trends had clarified their position most fully, the three Caucasians, with six votes, broke away from the majority *Iskra*-ists and went over to the other side; two delegates—Posadovsky

and Kostich—with two votes, fell away from the minority *Iskra*-ists. During the first two votes, the following had gone over to the other side or abstained: Lensky, Stepanov, and Gorsky of the *Iskra*-ist majority, and Deutsch of the minority. *The falling away of eight "Iskra"-ist votes (out of a total of thirty-three) gave the superiority to the coalition of the anti-"Iskra"-ists and the unstable elements.* It was just this *fundamental fact* of the Congress grouping that was repeated (only with *other Iskra*-ists falling away) during the vote on Paragraph 1 of the Rules and during the elections. It is not surprising that those who were defeated in the elections now carefully close their eyes to the *political reasons* for that defeat, to the *starting-points* of that conflict of shades which progressively revealed the unstable and politically spineless elements and exposed them ever more relentlessly in the eyes of the Party. The equality of languages incident shows us this conflict all the more clearly because at that time Comrade Martov had not yet earned the praises and approval of Akimov and Makhov.

f) The Agrarian Programme

The inconsistency of principle of the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Centre" was also clearly brought out by the debate on the agrarian programme, which took up so much time at the Congress (see Minutes, pp. 190-226) and raised quite a number of extremely interesting points. As was to be expected, the campaign against the programme was launched by Comrade Martynov (after some minor remarks by Comrades Lieber and Egorov). He brought out the old argument about redressing "this particular historical injustice", whereby, he claimed, we were indirectly "sanctifying other historical injustices", and so on. He was joined by Comrade Egorov, who even found that "the significance of this programme is unclear. Is it a programme for ourselves, that is, does it define our demands, or do we want to make it popular?" (!?!?) Comrade Lieber said he "would like to make the same points as Comrade Egorov". Comrade Makhov spoke up in his usual positive manner and declared that "the majority [?] of the speakers positively cannot understand what the programme

submitted means and what its aims are". The proposed programme, you see, "can hardly be considered a Social-Democratic agrarian programme"; it . . . "smacks somewhat of a game at redressing historical injustices"; it bears "the trace of demagogy and adventurism". As a theoretical justification of this profundity came the caricature and over-simplification so customary in vulgar Marxism: the *Iskra*-ists, we were told, "want to treat the peasants as something homogeneous in composition; but as the peasantry split up into classes long ago [?], advancing a single programme must inevitably render the whole programme demagogic and make it adventurist when put into practice" (p. 202). Comrade Makhov here "blurted out" the real reason why our agrarian programme meets with the disapproval of many Social-Democrats, who are prepared to "*recognise*" *Iskra* (as Makhov himself did) but who have absolutely failed to grasp its trend, its theoretical and tactical position. It was the vulgarisation of Marxism as applied to so complex and many-sided a phenomenon as the present-day system of Russian peasant economy, and not differences over particulars, that was and is responsible for the failure to understand this programme. And on this vulgar-Marxist standpoint the leaders of the anti-*Iskra* elements (Lieber and Martynov) and of the "Centre" (Egorov and Makhov) quickly found themselves in harmony. Comrade Egorov gave frank expression also to one of the characteristic features of *Yuzhny Rabochy* and the groups and circles gravitating towards it, namely, their failure to grasp the importance of the peasant movement, their failure to grasp that it was not overestimation, but, on the contrary, underestimation of its importance (and a lack of forces to utilise it) that was the weak side of our Social-Democrats at the time of the first famous peasant revolts. "I am far from sharing the infatuation of the editorial board for the peasant movement," said Comrade Egorov, "an infatuation to which many Social-Democrats have succumbed since the peasant disturbances." But, unfortunately, Comrade Egorov did not take the trouble to give the Congress any precise idea of what this infatuation of the *editorial board* consisted in; he did not take the trouble to make specific reference to any of the material published by *Iskra*. Moreover, he forgot that *all* the fundamental points of our

agrarian programme had already been developed by *Iskra* in its third issue,* that is, *long before* the peasant disturbances. Those whose "recognition" of *Iskra* was not merely verbal might well have given a little more attention to its theoretical and tactical principles!

"No, we cannot do much among the peasants!" Comrade Egorov exclaimed, and he went on to indicate that this exclamation was not meant as a protest against any particular "infatuation", but as a denial of our entire position: "It means that our slogan cannot compete with the slogan of the adventurists." A most characteristic formulation of an unprincipled attitude, which reduces everything to "competition" between the slogans of different parties! And this was said after the speaker had pronounced himself "satisfied" with the theoretical explanations, which pointed out that we strove for lasting success in our agitation, undismayed by temporary failures, and that lasting success (as against the resounding clamour of our "competitors"... for a short time) was impossible unless the programme had a firm theoretical basis (p. 196). What confusion is disclosed by this assurance of "satisfaction" followed by a repetition of the vulgar precepts inherited from the old Economism, for which the "competition of slogans" decided everything—not only the agrarian question, but the entire programme and tactics of the economic and political struggle! "You will not induce the agricultural labourer," Comrade Egorov said, "to fight side by side with the rich peasant for the cut-off lands,[13] which to no small extent are already in this rich peasant's hands."

There again you have the same over-simplification, undoubtedly akin to our opportunist Economism, which insisted that it was impossible to "induce" the proletarian to fight for what was to no small extent in the hands of the bourgeoisie and would fall into its hands to an even larger extent in the future. There again you have the vulgarisation that forgets the Russian peculiarities of the general capitalist relations between the agricultural labourer and the rich peasant. Actually, the cut-off lands today oppress the agricultural labourer *as well,* and he does not have to be "induced" to fight for emancipation

---

* See *Collected Works,* Vol. 4, pp. 420-28.—*Ed.*

from his state of servitude. It is certain intellectuals who have to be "induced"—induced to take a wider view of their tasks, induced to renounce stereotyped formulas when discussing specific questions, induced to take account of the historical situation, which complicates and modifies our aims. It is only the superstition that the muzhik is stupid—a superstition which, as Comrade Martov rightly remarked (p. 202), was to be detected in the speeches of Comrade Makhov and the other opponents of the agrarian programme—only this superstition explains why these opponents forget our agricultural labourer's actual conditions of life.

Having simplified the question into a naked contrast of worker and capitalist, the spokesmen of our "Centre" tried, as often happens, to ascribe their own narrow-mindedness to the muzhik. "It is precisely because I consider the muzhik, within the limits of his narrow class outlook, a clever fellow," Comrade Makhov remarked, "that I believe he will stand for the petty-bourgeois ideal of seizure and division." Two things are obviously confused here: the definition of the class outlook of the muzhik as that of a petty bourgeois, *and the restriction,* the reduction of *this* outlook to "narrow limits". It is in this reduction that the mistake of the Egorovs and Makhovs lies (just as the mistake of the Martynovs and Akimovs lay in reducing the outlook of the proletarian to "narrow limits"). For both logic and history teach us that the petty-bourgeois class outlook may be more or less narrow, and more or less progressive, precisely because of the dual status of the petty bourgeois. And far from dropping our hands in despair because of the narrowness ("stupidity") of the muzhik or because he is governed by "prejudice", we must work unremittingly to widen his outlook and help his reason to triumph over his prejudice.

The vulgar-"Marxist" view of the Russian agrarian question found its culmination in the concluding words of Comrade Makhov's speech, in which that faithful champion of the old *Iskra* editorial board set forth his principles. It was not for nothing that these words were greeted with applause ... true, it was ironical applause. "I do not know, of course, what to call a misfortune," said Comrade Makhov, outraged by Plekhanov's statement

that we were not at all alarmed by the movement for a General Redistribution,[14] and that we would not be the ones to hold back this progressive (bourgeois progressive) movement. "But this revolution, if it can be called such, would not be a revolutionary one. It would be truer to call it, not revolution, but reaction *(laughter)*, a revolution that was more like a riot.... Such a revolution would throw us back, and it would require a certain amount of time to get back to the position we have today. Today we have far more than during the French Revolution *(ironical applause)*, we have a Social-Democratic Party *(laughter)*...." Yes, a Social-Democratic Party which reasoned like Makhov, or which had central institutions of the Makhov persuasion, would indeed only deserve to be laughed at....

Thus we see that even on the purely theoretical questions raised by the agrarian programme, the already familiar grouping at once appeared. The anti-*Iskra*-ists (eight votes) rushed into the fray on behalf of vulgar Marxism, and the leaders of the "Centre", the Egorovs and Makhovs, trailed after them, constantly erring and straying into the same narrow outlook. It is quite natural, therefore, that the voting on certain points of the agrarian programme should have resulted in thirty and thirty-five votes in favour (pp. 225 and 226), that is, approximately the same figure as we observed in the dispute over the place of the Bund question on the agenda, in the Organising Committee incident, and in the question of shutting down *Yuzhny Rabochy*. An issue had only to arise which did not quite come within the already established and customary pattern, and which called for some independent application of Marx's theory to peculiar and new (new to the Germans) social and economic relations, and *Iskra*-ists who proved equal to the problems only made up three-fifths of the vote, while the whole "Centre" turned and followed the Liebers and Martynovs. Yet Comrade Martov strives to gloss over this obvious fact, fearfully avoiding all mention of votes where the shades of opinion were clearly revealed!

It is clearly evident from the debate on the agrarian programme that the *Iskra*-ists had to fight against a good two-fifths of the Congress. On this question the Caucasian delegates took up an absolutely correct stand—due large-

ly, in all probability, to the fact that first-hand knowledge of the forms taken by the numerous remnants of feudalism in their localities kept them from the schoolboyishly abstract and bare contrasts that satisfied the Makhovs. Martynov and Lieber, Makhov, and Egorov were combated by Plekhanov, by Gusev (who declared that he had "frequently encountered such a pessimistic view of our work in the countryside" as Comrade Egorov's "among the comrades active in Russia"), by Kostrov, by Karsky and by Trotsky. The latter rightly remarked that the "well-meant advice" of the critics of the agrarian programme "smacked too much of *philistinism*". It should only be said, since we are studying the political grouping at the Congress, that he was hardly correct when in this part of his speech (p. 208) he ranked Comrade Lange with Egorov and Makhov. Anyone who reads the minutes carefully will see that Lange and Gorin took quite a different stand from Egorov and Makhov. Lange and Gorin did not like the formulation of the point on the cut-off lands; they fully understood the idea of our agrarian programme, but tried to apply it *in a different way,* worked constructively to find what they considered a more irreproachable formulation, and in submitting their motions had in view either to convince the authors of the programme or else to side with them against all the non-*Iskra*-ists. For example, one has only to compare Makhov's motions to reject the whole agrarian programme (p.212; *nine* for, thirty-eight against) or individual points in it (p.216, etc.) with the position of Lange, who *moved* his own formulation of the point on the cut-off lands (p. 225), to become convinced of the radical difference between them.*

Referring to the arguments which smacked of "philistinism", Comrade Trotsky pointed out that "in the approaching revolutionary period we must link ourselves with the peasantry".... "In face of this task, the scepticism and political 'far-sightedness' of Makhov and Egorov are more harmful than any shortsightedness." Comrade Kostich, another minority *Iskra*-ist, very aptly pointed to Comrade Makhov's "unsureness of himself, of the stability of his principles"—a description that fits our "Centre" to a tittle. "In his pessimism Comrade Makhov

* Cf. Gorin's speech, p. 213.

is at one with Comrade Egorov, although they differ in shade," Comrade Kostich continued. "He forgets that the Social-Democrats are already working among the peasantry, are already directing their movement as far as possible. And this pessimism narrows the scope of our work" (p. 210).

To conclude our examination of the Congress discussion of the programme, it is worth while mentioning the brief debate on the subject of supporting oppositional trends. Our programme clearly states that the Social-Democratic Party supports "every *oppositional* and revolutionary movement *directed against the existing social and political order in Russia*". One would think that this last reservation made it quite clear *exactly which* oppositional trends we support. Nevertheless, the different shades that long ago developed in our Party at once revealed themselves *here too,* difficult as it was to suppose that any "perplexity or misunderstanding" was still possible on a question which had been chewed over so thoroughly! Evidently, it was not a matter of misunderstandings, but of *shades.* Makhov, Lieber, and Martynov at once sounded the alarm and again proved to be in so "compact" a minority that Comrade Martov would most likely have to attribute this too to intrigue, machination, diplomacy, and the other nice things (see his speech at the League Congress) to which people resort who are incapable of understanding the political reasons for the formation of "compact" groups of both minority and majority.

Makhov again began with a vulgar simplification of Marxism. "Our only revolutionary class is the proletariat," he declared, and from this correct premise he forthwith drew an incorrect conclusion: "The rest are of no account, they are mere hangers-on (*general laughter*) . . . Yes, they are mere hangers-on and only out to reap the benefits. I am against supporting them" (p. 226). Comrade Makhov's inimitable formulation of his position embarrassed many (of his supporters), but as a matter of fact Lieber and Martynov agreed with him when they proposed deleting the word "oppositional" or restricting it by an addition: "democratic-oppositional". Plekhanov quite rightly took the field against this amendment of Martynov's. "We must criticise the liberals," he said,

"expose their half-heartedness. That is true. . . . But, while exposing the narrowness and limitations of all movements other than the Social-Democratic, it is our duty to explain to the proletariat that even a constitution which does not confer universal suffrage would be a step forward compared with absolutism, and that therefore it should not prefer the existing order to such a constitution." Comrades Martynov, Lieber, and Makhov would not agree with this and persisted in their positon, which was attacked by Axelrod, Starover, and Trotsky and once more by Plekhanov. Comrade Makhov managed on this occasion to surpass himself. First he had said that the other classes (other than the proletariat) were "of no account" and that he was "against supporting them". Then he condescended to admit that "while essentially it is reactionary, the bourgeoisie is often revolutionary—for example, in the struggle against feudalism and its survivals". "But there are some groups," he continued, going from bad to worse, "which are always [?] reactionary—such are the handicraftsmen." Such were the gems of theory arrived at by those very leaders of our "Centre" who later foamed at the mouth in defence of the old editorial board! Even in Western Europe, where the guild system was so strong, it was the handicraftsmen, like the other petty bourgeois of the towns, who displayed an exceptionally revolutionary spirit in the era of the fall of absolutism. And it is particularly absurd of a Russian Social-Democrat to repeat without reflection what our Western comrades say about the handicraftsmen of today, that is, of an era separated by a century or half a century from the fall of absolutism. To speak of the handicraftsmen in Russia being politically reactionary as compared with the bourgeoisie is merely to repeat a set phrase learnt by rote.

Unfortunately, there is no record in the minutes of the number of votes cast for the rejected amendments of Martynov, Makhov, and Lieber on this question. All we can say is that, here too, the leaders of the anti-*Iskra* elements and one of the leaders of the "Centre"* joined forces in

* Another leader of this same group, the "Centre", Comrade Egorov, spoke on the question of supporting the oppositional trends on a different occasion, in connection with Axelrod's resolution on the Socialist-Revolutionaries (p. 359). Comrade Egorov detected a "contradiction" between the demand in the programme for *support* of every oppositional and revolutionary movement and the *antagonistic*

the already familiar grouping against the *Iskra*-ists. Summing up the *whole* discussion on the *programme*, one cannot help seeing that of the debates which were at all animated and evoked general interest there was *not one* that failed to reveal the difference of shades which Comrade Martov and the new *Iskra* editorial board now so carefully ignore.

g) The Party Rules. Comrade Martov's Draft

From the programme, the Congress passed to the Party Rules (we leave out the question of the Central Organ, already touched on above, and the delegates' reports, which the majority of the delegates were unfortunately unable to present in a satisfactory form). Needless to say, the question of the Rules was of tremendous importance to all of us. After all, *Iskra* had acted from the very outset not only as a press organ but also as an *organisational* nucleus. In an editorial in its fourth issue ("Where To Begin") *Iskra* had put forward a whole plan of organisation,* which it pursued systematically and steadily over a period of *three years*. When the Second Party Congress adopted *Iskra* as the Central Organ, two of the three points of the preamble of the resolution on the subject (p. 147) were devoted *precisely to this organisational plan and to "Iskra's" organisational ideas*: its role in directing the *practical* work of the Party and the leading part it had played in the work of attaining unity. It is quite natural, therefore, that the work of *Iskra* and

---

attitude towards both the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the liberals. In another form, and approaching the question from a somewhat different angle, Comrade Egorov here revealed the same narrow conception of Marxism, and the same unstable, semi-hostile attitude towards the position of *Iskra* (which he had "recognised"), as Comrades Makhov, Lieber, and Martynov had done.

* In his speech on the adoption of *Iskra* as the Central Organ, Comrade Popov said, *inter alia*: "I recall the article 'Where To Begin' in No. 3 or No. 4 of *Iskra*. Many of the comrades active in Russia found it a tactless article; others thought this plan was fantastic, and the majority [?—probably the majority around Comrade Popov] attributed it solely to ambition" (p. 140). As the reader sees, it is no new thing for me to hear my political views attributed to ambition—an explanation now being rehashed by Comrade Axelrod and Comrade Martov.

the entire work of organising the Party, the entire work of *actually* restoring the Party, *could not* be regarded as finished until definite ideas of organisation had been adopted by the whole Party and formally enacted. This task was to be performed by the Party's Rules of Organisation.

The principal ideas which *Iskra* strove to make the basis of the Party's organisation amounted essentially to the following two: first, the idea of centralism, which defined in principle the method of deciding all particular and detailed questions of organisation; second, the special function of an organ, a newspaper, for ideological leadership—an idea which took into account the temporary and special requirements of the Russian Social-Democratic working-class movement in the existing conditions of political slavery, with the *initial* base of operations for the revolutionary assault being set up abroad. The first idea, as the one matter of principle, had to pervade the entire Rules; the second, being a particular idea necessitated by temporary circumstances of place and mode of action, took the form of a *seeming* departure from centralism in the proposal to set up *two centres, a Central Organ and a Central Committee.* Both these principal *Iskra* ideas of Party organisation had been developed by me in the *Iskra* editorial (No. 4) "Where To Begin"* and in *What Is To Be Done?*** and, finally, had been explained in detail, in a form that was practically a finished set of Rules, in *A Letter to a Comrade.**** Actually, all that remained was the work of formulating the paragraphs of the Rules, which were to embody just those ideas if the recognition of *Iskra* was not to be merely nominal, a mere conventional phrase. In the preface to the new edition of my *Letter to a Comrade* I have already pointed out that a simple comparison of the Party Rules with that pamphlet is enough to establish the complete identity of the ideas of organisation contained in the two.*****

A propos of the work of formulating *Iskra*'s ideas of organisation in the Rules, I must deal with a certain in-

---

* See *Collected Works,* Vol. 5, pp. 13-24.—*Ed.*
** Ibid., Vol. 5, pp. 347-529.—*Ed.*
*** Ibid., Vol. 6, pp. 231-52.—*Ed.*
**** Ibid., Vol. 7, pp. 132-33.—*Ed.*

cident mentioned by Comrade Martov. "... A statement of fact," said Martov at the League Congress (p. 58), "will show you how far my lapse into opportunism on this paragraph [i.e., Paragraph 1] was unexpected by Lenin. About a month and a half or two months before the Congress I showed Lenin my draft, in which Paragraph 1 was formulated just in the way I proposed it at the Congress. Lenin objected to my draft on the ground that it was too detailed, and told me that all he liked was the idea of Paragraph 1—the definition of Party membership—which he would incorporate in his Rules with certain modifications, because he did not think my formulation was a happy one. Thus, Lenin had long been acquainted with my formulation, he knew my views on this subject. You thus see that I came to the Congress with my visor up, that I did not conceal my views. I warned him that I would oppose mutual co-optation, the principle of unanimity in cases of co-optation to the Central Committee and the Central Organ, and so on."

As regards the warning about opposing mutual co-optation, we shall see in its proper place how matters really stood. At present let us deal with this "open visor" of Martov's Rules. At the League Congress, recounting from memory this episode of his unhappy draft (which he himself withdrew at the Congress because it was an unhappy one, but after the Congress, with his characteristic consistency, again brought out into the light of day), Martov, as so often happens, forgot a good deal and therefore again got things muddled. One would have thought there had already been cases enough to warn him against quoting private conversations and relying on his memory (people involuntarily recall only what is to their advantage!)—nevertheless, for want of any other, Comrade Martov used unsound material. Today even Comrade Plekhanov is beginning to imitate him—evidently, a bad example is contagious.

I could not have "liked" the "idea" of Paragraph 1 of Martov's draft, for that draft contained *no idea* that came up at the Congress. His memory played him false. I have been fortunate enough to find Martov's draft among my papers, and in it "*Paragraph 1 is formulated not in the way he proposed it at the Congress*"! So much for the "open visor"!

Paragraph 1 in Martov's draft: "A member of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party is one who, accepting its programme, works actively to accomplish its aims under the control and direction of the organs [*sic*!] of the Party."

Paragraph 1 in my draft: "A member of the Party is one who accepts its programme and who supports the Party both financially and by personal participation in one of the Party organisations."

Paragraph 1 as formulated by Martov at the Congress and adopted by the Congress: "A member of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party is one who accepts its programme, supports the Party financially, and renders it regular personal assistance under the direction of one of its organisations."

It is clearly evident from this juxtaposition that there is no *idea* in Martov's draft, but only an *empty phrase*. That Party members must work under the control and direction of the *organs* of the Party goes without saying; *it cannot be otherwise*, and only those talk about it who love to talk without saying anything, who love to drown "Rules" in a flood of verbiage and bureaucratic formulas (that is, formulas useless for the work and supposed to be useful for display). The *idea* of Paragraph 1 appears only when the question is asked: can the *organs of the Party* exercise *actual* direction over Party members who *do not belong* to any of the *Party organisations*? There is not even a trace of this idea in Comrade Martov's draft. Consequently, *I could not have been acquainted* with the "views" of Comrade Martov "on this subject", for in Comrade Martov's draft there are *no views* on *this subject*. Comrade Martov's statement of fact proves to be a *muddle*.

About Comrade Martov, on the other hand, it does have to be said that from my draft "he knew my views on this subject" and did not protest against them, did not reject them, either on the editorial board, although my draft was shown to everyone two or three weeks before the Congress, or in talking to the delegates, who were acquainted *only* with my draft. More, even *at the Congress*, when I moved my draft Rules* and defended

* Incidentally, the Minutes Committee, in Appendix XI, has published the draft Rules "*moved at the Congress by Lenin*" (p. 393).

them *before the election of the Rules Committee*, Comrade Martov distinctly stated: "I associate myself with Comrade Lenin's conclusions. *Only on two points do I disagree with him*" (my italics)—on the mode of constituting the Council and on unanimous co-optation (p. 157). *Not a word was yet said about any difference* over Paragraph 1.

In his pamphlet on the state of siege, Comrade Martov saw fit to recall his Rules once more, and in great detail. He assures us there that his Rules, to which, with the exception of certain minor particulars, he would be prepared to subscribe even now (February 1904—we cannot say how it will be three months hence), "quite clearly expressed his disapproval of hypertrophy of centralism" (p. iv). The reason he did not submit this draft to the Congress, Comrade Martov *now* explains, was, firstly, that "his *Iskra* training had imbued him with disdain for Rules" (when it suits Comrade Martov, the word *Iskra* means for him, not a narrow circle spirit, but the most steadfast of trends! It is a pity, however, that Comrade Martov's *Iskra* training did not imbue him in three years with disdain for the anarchistic phrases by which the unstable mentality of the intellectual is capable of justifying the violation of Rules adopted by common consent). Secondly, that, don't you see, he, Comrade Martov, wanted to avoid "introducing any dissonance into the tactics of that basic organisational nucleus which *Iskra* constituted." Wonderfully consistent, isn't it? On a question of *principle* regarding an opportunist formulation of Paragraph 1 or hypertrophy of centralism, Comrade Martov was so afraid of any dissonance (which is terrible only from the narrowest circle point of view) that he did not set forth his disagreement even to a nucleus like the editorial

---

Here the Minutes Committee has also muddled things a little. It has confused my *original* draft (see *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 476-78.—*Ed.*), which was shown to all the delegates (and to many before the Congress), with the draft *moved at the Congress*, and *published the former* under the guise of the latter. Of course, I have no objection to my drafts being published, *even in all their stages of preparation*, but there was no need to cause confusion. And confusion has been caused, for Popov and Martov (pp. 154 and 157) criticised formulations in the draft I actually moved at the Congress, *which are not in the draft* published by the Minutes Committee (cf. p. 394, Paragraphs 7 and 11). With a little more care, the mistake could easily have been detected simply by comparing the pages I mention.

board! On the *practical* question of the composition of the central bodies, Comrade Martov appealed for the assistance of the Bund and the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists against the vote of the majority of the *Iskra* organisation (that real *basic organisational nucleus).* The "dissonance" in his phrases, which smuggle in the circle spirit in defence of the quasi-editorial board only to repudiate the "circle spirit" in the appraisal of the question by those best qualified to judge—this dissonance Comrade Martov does not notice. To punish him, we shall quote his draft Rules *in full,* noting for our part what *views* and what *hypertrophy* they reveal*:

"Draft of Party Rules.—I. Party Membership.—1) A member of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party is one who, accepting its programme, works actively to accomplish its aims under the control and direction of the organs of the Party.—2) Expulsion of a member from the Party for conduct incompatible with the interests of the Party shall be decided by the Central Committee. [The sentence of expulsion, giving the reasons, shall be preserved in the Party files and shall be communicated, on request, to every Party committee. The Central Committee's decision to expel a member may be appealed against to the Congress on the demand of two or more committees.]" I shall indicate by square brackets the provisions in Martov's draft which are *obviously* meaningless, failing to contain not only "ideas", but even any definite conditions or requirements—like the inimitable specification in the "Rules" as to *where exactly* a sentence of expulsion is to be preserved, or the provision that the Central Committee's decision to expel a member (and not all its decisions in general?) may be appealed against to the Congress. This, indeed, is hypertrophy of verbiage, or real bureaucratic formalism, which frames superfluous, patently useless or red-tapist, points and paragraphs. "II. Local Committees.—3) In its local work, the Party is represented by the Party committees" (how new and clever!). "4) [As Party committees are recognised all those existing at the time of the Second Congress and represented at the Congress.]—5) New Party committees, in addition to those mentioned in Paragraph 4, shall be appointed by the Central Committee [which shall either endorse as a committee the existing membership of the given local organisation, or shall set up a local committee by reforming the latter].—6) The committees may add to their membership by means of co-optation.—7) The Central Committee has the right to augment the membership of a local committee with such numbers of comrades (known to it) as shall not exceed one-third of the total membership of the committee." A perfect sample of bureaucracy. Why not exceeding one-third? What is the purpose of this? What is the sense of this restriction which restricts nothing, seeing that the *augment-*

* I might mention that unfortunately I could not find the first variant of Comrade Martov's draft, which consisted of some forty-eight paragraphs and suffered even more from "hypertrophy" of worthless formalism.

ing may be repeated over and over again? "8) [In the event of a local committee falling apart or being broken up by persecution" (does this mean that not all the members have been arrested?), "the Central Committee shall re-establish it.]" (Without regard to Paragraph 7? Does not Comrade Martov perceive a similarity between Paragraph 8 and those Russian laws on orderly conduct which command citizens to work on weekdays and rest on holidays?) "9) [A regular Party Congress may instruct the Central Committee to reform the composition of any local committee if the activities of the latter are found incompatible with the interests of the Party. In that event the existing committee shall be deemed dissolved and the comrades in its area of operation exempt from subordination* to it.]" The provision contained in this paragraph is as highly useful as the provision contained to this day in the Russian law which reads: "Drunkenness is forbidden to all and sundry." "10) [The local Party committees shall direct all the propagandist, agitational, and organisational activities of the Party in their localities and shall do all in their power to assist the Central Committee and the Central Organs of the Party in carrying out the general Party tasks entrusted to them.]" Phew! What in the name of all that's holy is the purpose of this? "11) [The internal arrangements of a local organisation, the mutual relations between a committee and the groups subordinate to it" (do you hear that, Comrade Axelrod?), "and the limits of the competence and autonomy" (are not the limits of competence the same as the limits of autonomy?) "of these groups shall be determined by the committee itself and communicated to the Central Committee and the editorial board of the Central Organs.]" (An omission: it is not stated where these communications are to be filed.) "12) [All groups subordinate to committees, and individual Party members, have the right to demand that their opinions and recommendations on any subject be communicated to the Central Committee of the Party and its Central Organs.]—13) The local Party committees shall contribute from their revenues to the funds of the Central Committee such sums as the Central Committee shall assign to their share.—III. Organisations for the Purpose of Agitation in Languages Other than Russian.—14) [For the purpose of carrying on agitation in any non-Russian language and of organising the workers among whom such agitation is carried on, separate organisations may be set up in places where such specialised agitation and the setting up of such organisations are deemed necessary.]—15) The question as to whether such a necessity exists shall be decided by the Central Committee of the Party, and in disputed cases by the Party Congress." The first part of this paragraph is superfluous in view of subsequent provisions in the Rules, and the second part, concerning disputed cases, is simply ludicrous. "16) [The local organisations mentioned in Paragraph 14 shall be autonomous in their special affairs but shall act under the control of the local committee and be subordinate to it, the forms of this control and the character of the organisational relations between the committee and the spe-

---

* We would draw Comrade Axelrod's attention to this word. Why, this is terrible! Here are the roots of that "Jacobinism" which goes to the length even . . . even of altering the composition of an editorial board. . . .

cial organisation being determined by the local committee." (Well, thank God! It is now quite clear that this whole spate of empty words was superfluous.) "In respect of the general affairs of the Party, such organisations shall act as part of the committee organisation.]—17) [The local organisations mentioned in Paragraph 14 may form autonomous leagues for the effective performance of their special tasks. These leagues may have their own special press and administrative bodies, both being under the direct control of the Central Committee of the Party. The Rules of these leagues shall be drawn up by themselves, but shall be subject to endorsement by the Central Committee of the Party.]—18) [The autonomous leagues mentioned in Paragraph 17 may include local Party committees if, by reason of local conditions, these devote themselves mainly to agitation in the given language. *Note.* While forming part of the autonomous league, such a committee does not cease to be a committee of the Party.]" (This entire paragraph is extremely useful and wonderfully clever, the note even more so.) "19) [The relations of local organisations belonging to an autonomous league with the central bodies of that league shall be controlled by the local committees.]—20) [The central press and administrative bodies of the autonomous leagues shall stand in the same relation to the Central Committee of the Party as the local Party committees.]—IV. Central Committee and Press Organs of the Party.—21) [The Party as a whole shall be represented by its Central Committee and its press organs, political and theoretical.]—22) The functions of the Central Committee shall be: to exercise general direction of all the practical activities of the Party; to ensure the proper utilisation and allocation of all its forces; to exercise control over the activities of all sections of the Party; to supply the local organisations with literature; to organise the technical apparatus of the Party; to convene Party congresses.—23) The functions of the press organs of the Party shall be: to exercise ideological direction of Party life, to conduct propaganda for the Party programme, and to carry out theoretical and popular elaboration of the world outlook of Social-Democracy.—24) All local Party committees and autonomous leagues shall maintain direct communication both with the Central Committee of the Party and with the editorial board of the Party organs and shall keep them periodically informed of the progress of the movement and of organisational work in their localities.—25) The editorial board of the Party press organs shall be appointed at Party congresses and shall function until the next congress.—26) [The editorial board shall be autonomous in its internal affairs] and may in the interval between congresses augment or alter its membership, informing the Central Committee in each case.—27) All statements issued by the Central Committee or receiving its sanction shall, on the demand of the Central Committee, be published in the Party organ.—28) The Central Committee, by agreement with the editorial board of the Party organs, shall set up special writers' groups for various forms of literary work.—29) The Central Committee shall be appointed at Party congresses and shall function until the next congress. The Central Committee may augment its membership by means of co-optation, without restriction as to numbers, in each case informing the editorial board of the Central Organs of the Party.—V. The Party Organisation Abroad.—30) The Party organ-

isation abroad shall carry on propaganda among Russians living abroad and organise the socialist elements among them. It shall be headed by an elected administrative body.—31) The autonomous Leagues belonging to the Party may maintain branches abroad to assist in carrying out their special tasks. These branches shall constitute autonomous groups within the general organisation abroad.—VI. Party Congresses.—32) The supreme Party authority is the Congress.—33) [The Party Congress shall lay down the Programme, Rules and guiding principles of the activities of the Party; it shall control the work of all Party bodies and settle disputes arising between them.]—34) The right to be represented at congresses shall be enjoyed by: a) all local Party committees; b) the central administrative bodies of all the autonomous leagues belonging to the Party; c) the Central Committee of the Party and the editorial board of its Central Organs; d) the Party organisation abroad.—35) Mandates may be entrusted to proxies, but no delegate shall hold more than three valid mandates. A mandate may be divided between two representatives. Binding instructions are forbidden.—36) The Central Committee shall be empowered to invite to the congress in a deliberative capacity comrades whose presence may be useful.—37) Amendments to the Programme or Rules of the Party shall require a two-thirds majority; other questions shall be decided by a simple majority.—38) A congress shall be deemed properly constituted if more than half the Party Committees existing at the time of it are represented.—39) Congresses shall, as far as possible, be convened once every two years. [If for reasons beyond the control of the Central Committee a congress cannot be convened within this period, the Central Committee shall on its own responsibility postpone it.]"

Any reader who, by way of an exception, has had the patience to read these so-called Rules to the end assuredly will not expect me to give special reasons for the following conclusions. First conclusion: the Rules suffer from almost incurable dropsy. Second conclusion: it is impossible to discover in these Rules any special shade of organisational views evincing a disapproval of hypertrophy of centralism. Third conclusion: Comrade Martov acted very wisely indeed in concealing from the eyes of the world (and withholding from discussion at the Congress) more than 38/39 of his Rules. Only it is rather odd that *à propos* of this concealment he should talk about an open visor.

h) Discussion on Centralism PRIOR to the Split Among the ISKRA-ists

107831

Before passing to the really interesting question of the formulation of Paragraph 1 of the Rules, a question which undoubtedly disclosed the existence of different shades of

opinion, let us dwell a little on that brief general discussion of the Rules which occupied the 14th and part of the 15th Congress sittings. This discussion is of some significance inasmuch as it *preceded* the complete divergence within the *Iskra* organisation over the composition of the central bodies, whereas the subsequent debate on the Rules in general, and on co-optation in particular, took place after this divergence in the *Iskra* organisation. Naturally, *before* the divergence we were able to express our views more impartially, in the sense that they were more independent of views about the personal composition of the Central Committee, which became such a keen issue with us all. Comrade Martov, as I have already remarked, *associated himself* (p. 157) with my views on organisation, only making the reservation that he differed on two points of *detail.* Both the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Centre", on the contrary, at once took the field against both *fundamental* ideas of the whole *Iskra* organisational plan (and, consequently, against the Rules in their entirety): against centralism and against "two centres". Comrade Lieber referred to my Rules as "organised distrust" and discerned *decentralism* in the proposal for two centres (as did Comrades Popov and Egorov). Comrade Akimov wanted to broaden the jurisdiction of the local committees, and, in particular, to grant them themselves "the right to alter their composition". "They should be allowed greater freedom of action.... The local committees should be elected by the active workers in their localities, just as the Central Committee is elected by the representatives of all the active organisations in Russia. And if even this cannot be allowed, let the number of members that the Central Committee may appoint to local committees be limited..." (p. 158). Comrade Akimov, as you see, suggested an argument against "hypertrophy of centralism", but Comrade Martov remained deaf to these weighty arguments, not yet having been induced by his defeat over the composition of the central bodies to follow in Akimov's wake. He remained deaf even when Comrade Akimov suggested to him the "*idea*" *of his own Rules* (Paragraph 7—restriction of the Central Committee's right to appoint members to the committees)! At that time Comrade Martov still did not want any "dissonance" with us, and for that reason tolerated a dissonance both with Com-

rade Akimov and with himself.... At that time the only opponents of "monstrous centralism" were those to whom *Iskra*'s centralism was clearly *disadvantageous:* it was opposed by Akimov, Lieber, and Goldblatt, *followed,* cautiously and circumspectly (so that they could always turn back), by Egorov (see pp. 156 and 276) and such like. At that time it was still clear to the vast majority of the Party that it was the parochial, circle interests of the Bund, *Yuzhny Rabochy,* etc., that evoked the protest against centralism. For that matter, now too it is clear to the majority of the Party that it is the circle interests of the old *Iskra* editorial board that cause it to protest against centralism....

Take, for example, Comrade Goldblatt's speech (pp. 160-61). He inveighs against my "monstrous" centralism and claims that it would lead to the "destruction" of the lower organisations, that it is "permeated through and through with the desire to give the centre unrestricted powers and the unrestricted right to interfere in everything", that it allows the organisations "only one right—to submit without a murmur to orders from above", etc. "The centre proposed by the draft would find itself in a vacuum, it would have no peripheral organisations around it, but only an amorphous mass in which its executive agents would move." Why, this is exactly the kind of *false phrase-mongering* to which the Martovs and Axelrods proceeded to treat us after their defeat at the Congress. The Bund was laughed at when it fought *our* centralism while granting *its own* central body *even more definite* unrestricted rights (e.g., to appoint and expel members, and even to refuse to admit delegates to congresses). And when people sort things out, the howls of the *minority* will also be laughed at, for they cried out against centralism and against the Rules when they were in the minority, but lost no time in taking advantage of the Rules once they had managed to make themselves the majority.

Over the question of two centres, the grouping was also clearly evident: *all* the *Iskra*-ists were opposed by Lieber, by Akimov (the first to strike up the now favourite Axelrod-Martov tune about the Central Organ predominating over the Central Committee on the Council), by Popov, and by Egorov. From the ideas of organisation which the *old Iskra* had always advocated (and which the Po-

povs and Egorovs had *verbally* approved!), the plan for two centres followed of itself. The policy of the *old Iskra* cut across the plans of *Yuzhny Rabochy*, the plans to create a parallel popular organ and to convert it virtually into the dominant organ. There lies the root of the paradox, so strange at first glance, that all the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the entire Marsh were in favour of one central body, that is, *of seemingly greater centralism*. Of course, there were some delegates (especially among the Marsh) who probably did not have a clear idea where the organisational plans of *Yuzhny Rabochy* would lead, and were bound to lead in the nature of things, but they were impelled to follow the anti-*Iskra*-ists by their very irresoluteness and unsureness of themselves.

Of the speeches by *Iskra*-ists during *this* debate on the Rules (the one preceding the split among the *Iskra*-ists), particularly noteworthy were those of Comrades Martov ("association" with my ideas of organisation) and Trotsky. Every word of the answer the latter gave Comrades Akimov and Lieber exposes the utter falsity of the "minority's" post-Congress conduct and theories. "The Rules, he [Comrade Akimov] said, do not define the jurisdiction of the Central Committee with enough precision. I cannot agree with him. On the contrary, this definition is precise and means that inasmuch as the Party is one whole, it must be ensured control over the local committees. Comrade Lieber said, borrowing my expression, that the Rules were 'organised distrust'. That is true. But I used this expression in reference to the Rules proposed by the Bund spokesmen, which represented organised distrust on the part of a section of the Party towards the whole Party. Our Rules, on the other hand" (at that time, before the defeat over the composition of the central bodies, the Rules were "ours"!), "represent the organised distrust of the Party towards all its sections, that is, control over all local, district, national, and other organisations" (p. 158). Yes, *our* Rules are *here* correctly described, and we would advise those to bear this more constantly in mind who are now assuring us with an easy conscience that it was the intriguing majority who conceived and introduced the system of "organised distrust" or, which is the same thing, the "state of siege". One has only to compare this speech with the speeches at the Congress of the

League Abroad to get a specimen of political spinelessness, a specimen of how the views of Martov and Co. changed depending on whether the matter concerned their own group of a lower order or someone else's.

i) Paragraph One of the Rules

We have already cited the different formulations around which an interesting debate flared up at the Congress. This debate took up nearly two sittings and ended with *two roll-call* votes (during the entire Congress there were, if I am not mistaken, only eight roll-call votes, which were resorted to only in very important cases because of the great loss of time they involved). The question at issue was undoubtedly one of principle. The interest of the Congress in the debate was tremendous. *All* the delegates voted—a rare occurrence at our Congress (as at any big congress) and one that likewise testifies to the interest displayed by the disputants.

What, then, was the substance of the matter in dispute? I already said at the Congress, and have since repeated it time and again, that "I by no means consider our difference [over Paragraph 1] so vital as to be a matter of life or death to the Party. We shall certainly not perish because of an unfortunate clause in the Rules!" (P. 250.)* Taken by itself, this difference, although it did reveal shades of principle, could never have called forth that divergence (actually, to speak unreservedly, that split) which took place after the Congress. But every *little* difference may become a *big* one if it is insisted on, if it is put into the foreground, if people *set about* searching for all the roots and branches of the difference. Every *little* difference may assume *tremendous* importance if it serves as the starting-point for a *swing* towards definite mistaken views, and if these mistaken views are combined, by virtue of new and additional divergences, with *anarchistic* actions which bring the Party to the point of a split.

And that is just what happened in the present case. The comparatively slight difference over Paragraph 1 has now acquired tremendous importance, because it was this that started the swing towards the opportunist profundities

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 501.—*Ed.*

and anarchistic phrase-mongering of the minority (especially at the League Congress, and subsequently in the columns of the new *Iskra* as well). It was this that *marked the beginning* of the coalition of the *Iskra*-ist minority with the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the Marsh, which assumed final and definite shape by the time of the elections, and without understanding which *it is impossible to understand* the major and fundamental divergence over the composition of the central bodies. The slight mistake of Martov and Axelrod over Paragraph 1 was a slight crack in our pot (as I put it at the League Congress). The pot could be bound tight with a *hard* knot (and not a hangman's knot, as it was misunderstood by Martov, who during the League Congress was in a state bordering on hysteria); or *all* efforts could be directed towards widening the crack and breaking the pot in two. And that is what happened, thanks to the boycott and similar anarchistic moves of the zealous Martovites. The difference over Paragraph 1 played no small part in the elections to the central bodies, and Martov's defeat in the elections led him into a "struggle over principles" with the use of grossly mechanical and even brawling methods (such as his speeches at the Congress of the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad).

Now, after all these happenings, the question of Paragraph 1 has thus assumed *tremendous importance,* and we must clearly realise both the character of the Congress groupings in the voting on this paragraph and—far more important still—the real nature of those *shades of opinion* which revealed or began to reveal themselves over Paragraph 1. *Now,* after the events with which the reader is familiar, the question *stands* as follows: Did Martov's formulation, which was supported by Axelrod, reflect his (or their) instability, vacillation, and political vagueness, as I expressed it at the Party Congress (p. 333), his (or their) deviation towards Jaurèsism[15] and anarchism, as Plekhanov suggested at the League Congress (League Minutes, p. 102 and elsewhere)? Or did my formulation, which was supported by Plekhanov, reflect a wrong, bureaucratic, formalistic, Jack-in-office, un-Social-Democratic conception of centralism? *Opportunism and anarchism, or bureaucracy and formalism*?—that is the way the question *stands now,* when the little difference has be-

come a big one. And when discussing the pros and cons of my formulation *on their merits,* we must *bear in mind* just *this* presentation of the question, which has been forced upon us all by the events, or, I would say if it did not sound too pompous, has been evolved by history.

Let us begin the examination of these pros and cons with an analysis of the Congress debate. The first speech, that of Comrade Egorov, is interesting only for the fact that his attitude *(non liquet,* it is not yet clear to me, I do not yet know where the truth lies) was very characteristic of the attitude of many delegates, who found it difficult to grasp the rights and wrongs of this really new and fairly complex and detailed question. The next speech, that of Comrade Axelrod, at once made the issue one of principle. This was the first speech Comrade Axelrod made at the Congress on questions of principle, one might even say the first speech he made at all, and it can scarcely be claimed that his début with the celebrated "professor" was particularly fortunate. "I think," Comrade Axelrod said, "that we must draw a distinction between the concepts party and organisation. These two concepts are being confused here. And the confusion is dangerous." That was the first argument against my formulation. Examine it more closely. When I say that the Party should be the *sum* (and not the mere arithmetical sum, but a complex) of *organisations,** does that mean that I "confuse" the concepts party and organisation? Of course not. I thereby

* The word "organisation" is commonly employed in two senses, a broad and a narrow one. In the narrow sense it signifies an individual nucleus of a collective of people with at least a minimum degree of coherent form. In the broad sense it signifies the sum of such nuclei united into a whole. For example, the navy, the army, or the state is at one and the same time a sum of organisations (in the narrow sense of the word) and a variety of social organisation (in the broad sense of the word). The Department of Education is an organisation (in the broad sense of the word) and consists of a number of organisations (in the narrow sense of the word). Similarly, the Party is an organisation, *should be* an organisation (in the broad sense of the word); at the same time, the Party should consist of a whole number of diversified organisations (in the narrow sense of the word). Therefore, when he spoke of drawing a distinction between the concepts party and organisation, Comrade Axelrod, firstly, did not take account of the difference between the broad and the narrow sense of the word "organisation", and, secondly, did not observe that he was himself *confusing* organised and unorganised elements.

express clearly and precisely my wish, my demand, that the Party, as the vanguard of the class, should be as *organised* as possible, that the Party should admit to its ranks only such elements *as allow of at least a minimum of organisation*. My opponent, on the contrary, *lumps together* in the Party organised and unorganised elements, those who lend themselves to direction and those who do not, the advanced and the incorrigibly backward—for the corrigibly backward can join an organisation. *This confusion* is indeed *dangerous*. Comrade Axelrod further cited the "strictly secret and centralised organisations of the past" (Zemlya i Volya[16] and Narodnaya Volya[17]): around them, he said, "we grouped a large number of people who did not belong to the organisation but who helped it in one way or another and who were regarded as Party members.... This principle should be even more strictly observed in the Social-Democratic organisation." Here we come to one of the *key* points of the matter: is "this principle" really a Social-Democratic one—this principle which allows people who do not belong to any of the organisations of the Party, but only "help it in one way or another", to call themselves Party members? And Plekhanov gave the only possible reply to this question when he said: "Axelrod was wrong in citing the seventies. At that time there was a well-organised and splendidly disciplined centre; around it there were the organisations of various categories, which it had created; and what remained outside these organisations was chaos, anarchy. The component elements of this chaos called themselves Party members, but this harmed rather than benefited the cause. We should not imitate the anarchy of the seventies, but avoid it." Thus "this principle", which Comrade Axelrod wanted to pass off as a Social-Democratic one, is in reality an *anarchistic principle*. To refute this, one would have to show that control, direction, and discipline *are possible* outside an organisation, and that conferring the title of Party members on "elements of chaos" *is necessary*. The supporters of Comrade Martov's formulation did not show, and could not show, *either* of these things. Comrade Axelrod took as an example "a professor who regards himself as a Social-Democrat and declares himself such". To complete the thought contained in this example, Comrade Axelrod should have gone on to tell us whether the organised

Social-Democrats themselves regard this professor as a Social-Democrat. By failing to raise this further question, Comrade Axelrod abandoned his argument half-way. After all, one thing or the other. Either the organised Social-Democrats regard the professor in question as a Social-Democrat, in which case why should they not enrol him in one of the Social-Democratic organisations? For only if the professor is thus enrolled will his "declaration" answer to his actions, and not be empty talk (as professorial declarations all too frequently are). Or the organised Social-Democrats do *not* regard the professor as a Social-Democrat, in which case it would be absurd, senseless and *harmful* to allow him the right to bear the honourable and responsible title of Party member. The matter therefore reduces itself to the alternative: consistent application of the principle of organisation, or the sanctification of disunity and anarchy? Are we to build the Party on the basis of that already formed and welded core of *Social-Democrats* which brought about the Party Congress, for instance, and which should enlarge and multiply Party organisations of all kinds; or are we to content ourselves with the soothing *phrase* that all who help are Party members? "If we adopt Lenin's formula," Comrade Axelrod continued, "we shall be throwing overboard a section of those who, even if they cannot be directly admitted to an organisation, are nevertheless Party members." The confusion of concepts of which Comrade Axelrod wanted to accuse me stands out here quite clearly in his own case: he already takes it for granted that all who help *are* Party members, whereas that is what the whole argument is about and our opponents have still to *prove* the necessity and value of such an interpretation. What is the meaning of the phrase "throwing overboard", which at first glance seems so terrible? Even if only members of organisations recognised as Party organisations are regarded as Party members, people who cannot "directly" join any Party organisation can still work in an organisation which does not belong to the Party but is associated with it. Consequently, there can be no talk of throwing anyone overboard in the sense of preventing them from working, from taking part in the movement. On the contrary, the stronger our Party organisations, consisting of *real* Social-Democrats, the less wavering and instability there is

within the Party, the broader, more varied, richer, and more fruitful will be the Party's influence on the elements of the working-class *masses* surrounding it and guided by it. The Party, as the vanguard of the working class, must not be confused, after all, with the entire class. And Comrade Axelrod is guilty of just this confusion (which is characteristic of our opportunist Economism in general) when he says: "First and foremost we are, of course, creating an organisation of the most active elements of the Party, an organisation of revolutionaries; but since we are the Party of a class, we must take care not to leave outside the Party ranks people who consciously, though perhaps not very actively, associate themselves with that Party." Firstly, the active elements of the Social-Democratic working-class party will include not only organisations of revolutionaries, but a *whole number* of workers' organisations recognised as Party organisations. Secondly, how, by what logic, does the fact that we are the party of a class warrant the conclusion that it is unnecessary to make a distinction between those who *belong* to the Party and those who *associate* themselves with it? Just the contrary: precisely because there are differences in degree of consciousness and degree of activity, a distinction must be made in degree of proximity to the Party. We are the party of a class, and therefore *almost the entire class* (and in times of war, in a period of civil war, the entire class) should act under the leadership of our Party, should adhere to our Party as closely as possible. But it would be Manilovism[18] and "tail-ism" to think that the entire class, or almost the entire class, can ever rise, under capitalism, to the level of consciousness and activity of its vanguard, of its Social-Democratic Party. No sensible Social-Democrat has ever doubted that under capitalism even the trade union organisations (which are more primitive and more comprehensible to the undeveloped sections) are incapable of embracing the entire, or almost the entire, working class. To forget the distinction between the vanguard and the whole of the masses gravitating towards it, to forget the vanguard's constant duty of *raising* ever wider sections to its own advanced level, means simply to deceive oneself, to shut one's eyes to the immensity of our tasks, and to narrow down these tasks. And it is just such a shutting of one's eyes, it is just such forgetfulness,

to obliterate the difference between those who associate themselves and those who belong, those who are conscious and active and those who only help.

To argue that we are the party of a class *in justification* of organisational looseness, *in justification* of confusing organisation with disorganisation, is to repeat the mistake of Nadezhdin, who confused "the philosophical and social-historical question of the 'depth' of the 'roots' of the movement with the technical and organisational question" (*What Is To Be Done?* p. 91).* It is this confusion, wrought by the deft hand of Comrade Axelrod, that was then repeated dozens of times by the speakers who defended Comrade Martov's formulation. "The more widespread the title of Party member, the better," said Martov, without, however, explaining the benefit of a widespread *title* which did not correspond to fact. Can it be denied that control over Party members who do not belong to a Party organisation is a mere fiction? A widespread fiction is not beneficial, but harmful. "We could only rejoice if every striker, every demonstrator, answering for his actions, could proclaim himself a Party member" (p.239). Is that so? *Every striker* should have the right *to proclaim himself a Party member*? In this statement Comrade Martov instantly carries his mistake to the point of absurdity, by *lowering* Social-Democracy to the level of mere strike-making, thereby repeating the misadventures of the Akimovs. We could only rejoice if the Social-Democrats succeeded in directing every strike, for it is their plain and unquestionable duty to direct every manifestation of the class struggle of the proletariat, and strikes are one of the most profound and most powerful manifestations of that struggle. But we should be tail-enders if we were to *identify* this primary form of struggle, which *ipso facto* is no more than a trade unionist form, with the all-round and conscious Social-Democratic struggle. We should be opportunistically *legitimising a patent falsehood* if we were to allow every striker the right to "proclaim himself a Party member", for *in the majority of cases* such a "proclamation" would be *false*. We should be indulging in complacent daydreaming if we tried to assure ourselves

---

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 461.—*Ed.*

and others that *every striker* can *be* a Social-Democrat and a member of the Social-Democratic Party, in face of that infinite disunity, oppression, and stultification which under capitalism is bound to weigh down upon such very wide sections of the "untrained", unskilled workers. This example of the "*striker*" brings out with particular clarity the difference between the *revolutionary striving* to direct every strike in a Social-Democratic way and the *opportunist phrase-mongering* which proclaims *every* striker a Party member. We are the Party of a class inasmuch as we *in fact* direct almost the entire, or even the entire, proletarian class in a Social-Democratic way; but only Akimovs can conclude from this that we must *in word* identify the Party and the class.

"I am not afraid of a conspiratorial organisation," said Comrade Martov in this same speech; but, he added, "for me a conspiratorial organisation has meaning only when it is enveloped by a broad Social-Democratic working-class party" (p. 239). To be exact he should have said: when it is enveloped by a broad Social-Democratic working-class *movement*. And in that form Comrade Martov's proposition would have been not only indisputable, but a plain truism. I dwell on this point only because subsequent speakers turned Comrade Martov's truism into the very *prevalent and very vulgar* argument that Lenin wants "to confine the sum-total of Party members to the sum-total of conspirators". This conclusion, which can only provoke a smile, was drawn both by Comrade Posadovsky and by Comrade Popov; and when it was taken up by Martynov and Akimov, its true character of an opportunist phrase became altogether manifest. Today Comrade Axelrod is developing this same argument in the new *Iskra* by way of acquainting the reading public with the new editorial board's new views on organisation. Already at the Congress, at the very first sitting where Paragraph 1 was discussed, I noticed that our opponents wanted to avail themselves of this cheap weapon, and therefore warned in my speech (p. 240): "It should not be imagined that Party organisations must consist solely of professional revolutionaries. We need the most diverse organisations of all types, ranks, and shades, beginning with extremely limited and secret and ending with very broad, free, *lose Organisationen*." This is such an obvious and self-evident truth that I did

not think it necessary to dwell on it. But today, when we have been dragged back in so many respects, one has to "repeat old lessons" on this subject too. In order to do so, I shall quote certain passages from *What Is To Be Done?* and *A Letter to a Comrade*.

"... A circle of leaders of the type of Alexeyev and Myshkin, of Khalturin and Zhelyabov, is capable of coping with political tasks in the genuine and most practical sense of the term, for the reason and to the extent that their impassioned propaganda meets with response among the spontaneously awakening masses, and their sparkling energy is answered and supported by the energy of the revolutionary class."* In order to be a Social-Democratic *party*, we must win the *support* precisely of the *class*. It is not that the Party should envelop the conspiratorial organisation, as Comrade Martov thought, but that the revolutionary class, the proletariat, should envelop the Party, the latter to include both conspiratorial and non-conspiratorial organisations.

"... The workers' organisations for the economic struggle should be trade union organisations. Every Social-Democratic worker should as far as possible assist and actively work in these organisations. But... it is certainly not in our interest to demand that only Social-Democrats should be eligible for membership in the trade unions since that would only narrow the scope of our influence upon the masses. Let every worker who understands the need to unite for the struggle against the employers and the government join the trade unions. The very aim of the trade unions would be impossible of achievement if they did not unite all who have attained at least this elementary degree of understanding—if they were not very *broad* organisations. The broader these organisations, the broader will be our influence over them—an influence due, not only to the 'spontaneous' development of the economic struggle, but to the direct and conscious effort of the socialist trade union members to influence their comrades" (p.86).** Incidentally, the example of the trade unions is particularly significant for an assessment of the controversial question of Paragraph 1. That

---

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 447.—*Ed.*

** Ibid., p. 454.—*Ed.*

these unions *should* work "under the control and direction" of the Social-Democratic organisations, of that there can be no two opinions among Social-Democrats. But *on those grounds* to confer on all members of trade unions the right to "proclaim themselves" members of the Social-Democratic Party would be an obvious absurdity and would constitute a double danger: on the one hand, of *narrowing* the dimensions of the trade union movement and thus weakening the solidarity of the workers; and, on the other, of opening the door of the Social-Democratic Party to vagueness and vacillation. The German Social-Democrats had occasion to solve a similar problem in a practical instance, in the celebrated case of the Hamburg bricklayers working on piece rates.[19] The Social-Democrats did not hesitate for a moment to proclaim strike-breaking dishonourable in Social-Democratic eyes, that is, to acknowledge that to direct and support strikes was *their own* vital concern; but at the same time they just as resolutely rejected the demand for identifying the interests of the Party with the interests of the trade unions, for *making the Party responsible* for individual acts of individual trade unions. The Party should and will strive to imbue the trade unions with its spirit and bring them under its influence; but precisely in order to do so it must distinguish the fully Social-Democratic elements in these unions (the elements belonging to the Social-Democratic Party) from those which are not fully class-conscious and politically active, and not confuse the two, as Comrade Axelrod would have us do.

"...Centralisation of the most secret functions in an organisation of revolutionaries will not diminish, but rather increase the extent and enhance the quality of the activity of a large number of other organisations that are intended for a broad public and are therefore as loose and as non-secret as possible, such as workers' trade unions; workers' self-education circles and circles for reading illegal literature; and socialist, as well as democratic, circles among *all* other sections of the population; etc., etc. We must have such circles, trade unions, and organisations everywhere in *as large a number as possible* and with the widest variety of functions; but it would be absurd and harmful to *confound* them with the organisation of *revolutionaries*, to efface the border-line between them..."

(p. 96).* This quotation shows how out of place it was for Comrade Martov to remind me that the organisation of revolutionaries should be *enveloped* by broad organisations of workers. I had already pointed this out in *What Is To Be Done?*—and in *A Letter to a Comrade* I developed this idea more concretely. Factory circles, I wrote there, "are particularly important to us: the main strength of the movement lies in the organisation of the workers at the *large* factories, for the large factories (and mills) contain not only the predominant part of the working class, as regards numbers, but even more as regards influence, development, and fighting capacity. Every factory must be our fortress.... The factory subcommittee should endeavour to embrace the whole factory, the largest possible number of the workers, with a network of all kinds of circles (or agents).... All groups, circles, subcommittees etc., should enjoy the status of committee institutions or branches of a committee. Some of them will openly declare their wish to join the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and, *if endorsed* by the committee, will join the Party, and will assume definite functions (on the instructions of, or in agreement with, the committee), will undertake to obey the orders of the Party organs, *receive the same rights as all Party members,* and be regarded as immediate candidates for membership of the committee, etc. Others *will not join* the R.S.D.L.P., and will have the status of circles formed by Party members, or associated with one Party group or another, etc." (pp. 17-18).** The words I have underlined make it particularly clear that the *idea* of my formulation of Paragraph 1 was already fully expressed in *A Letter to a Comrade*. The conditions for joining the Party are directly indicated there, namely: 1) a certain degree of organisation, and 2) endorsement by a Party committee. A page later I roughly indicate also what groups and organisations should (or should not) be admitted to the Party, and for what reasons: "The distributing groups should belong to the R.S.D.L.P. and know a certain number of its members and functionaries. The groups for studying labour conditions and drawing up trade union demands need not

---

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 466 —*Ed.*

** See *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 243, 245, 246.—*Ed.*

necessarily belong to the R.S.D.L.P. Groups of students, officers, or office employees engaged in self-education *in conjunction with* one or two Party members should in some cases not even be aware that these belong to the Party, etc." (pp. 18-19).*

There you have additional material on the subject of the "open visor"! Whereas the formula of Comrade Martov's draft does not even touch on relations between the Party and the organisations, I pointed out nearly a year before the Congress that some organisations should belong to the Party, and others not. In *A Letter to a Comrade* the idea I advocated at the Congress was already clearly outlined. The matter might be put graphically in the following way. Depending on degree of organisation in general and of secrecy of organisation in particular, roughly the following categories may be distinguished: 1) organisations of revolutionaries; 2) organisations of workers, as broad and as varied as possible (I confine myself to the working class, taking it as self-evident that, under certain conditions, certain elements of other classes will also be included here). These two categories constitute the Party. Further, 3) workers' organisations associated with the Party; 4) workers' organisations not associated with the Party but actually under its control and direction; 5) unorganised elements of the working class, who in part also come under the direction of the Social-Democratic Party, at any rate during big manifestations of the class struggle. That, approximately, is how the matter presents itself to me. As Comrade Martov sees it, on the contrary, the border-line of the Party remains absolutely vague, for "every striker" can "proclaim himself a Party member". What benefit is there in this looseness? A widespread "title". Its harm is that it introduces a *disorganising* idea, the confusing of class and party.

In illustration of the general propositions we have adduced, let us take a cursory glance at the further discussion of Paragraph 1 at the Congress. Comrade Brouckère (to the great glee of Comrade Martov) pronounced in favour of my formulation, but *his* alliance with me, unlike Comrade Akimov's with Martov, turned out to be based on a misunderstanding. Comrade Brouckère did "not agree

---

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 247.—*Ed.*

with the Rules as a whole, with their entire spirit" (p. 239), and defended my formulation *as the basis of the democracy* which the supporters of *Rabocheye Dyelo* desired. Comrade Brouckère had not yet risen to the view that in a political struggle it is sometimes necessary to choose the *lesser evil;* Comrade Brouckère did not realise that it was useless to advocate democracy at a Congress like ours. Comrade Akimov was more perspicacious. He put the question quite rightly when he stated that "Comrades Martov and Lenin are arguing as to which [formulation] will best achieve their common aim" (p. 252); "Brouckère and I," he continued, "want to choose the one *which will least achieve that aim.* From this angle I choose Martov's formulation." And Comrade Akimov frankly explained that he considered "their very aim" (that is, the aim of Plekhanov, Martov, and myself—the creation of a directing organisation of revolutionaries) to be "impracticable and harmful"; like Comrade Martynov,* he advocated the Economist idea that "an organisation of revolutionaries" was unnecessary. He was "confident that in the end the realities of life will force their way into our Party organisation, whether you bar their path with Martov's formulation or with Lenin's". It would not be worth while dwelling on this "tail-ist" conception of the "realities of life" if we did not encounter it in the case of Comrade Martov too. In general, Comrade Martov's second speech (p. 245) is so interesting that it deserves to be examined in detail.

Comrade Martov's first argument: control by the Party organisations over Party members not belonging to them "is practicable, inasmuch as, having assigned a function to someone, the committee will be able to watch over it"

---

* Comrade Martynov, it is true, wanted to be different from Comrade Akimov, he wanted to show that conspiratorial did not mean secret, that behind the two different words were two different concepts. What the difference is, neither Comrade Martynov nor Comrade Axelrod, who is now following in his footsteps, ever did explain. Comrade Martynov "acted" as if I had not—for example in *What Is To Be Done?* (as well as in the *Tasks* [see *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, pp. 323-51.—*Ed.*])—resolutely opposed "*confining* the political struggle to conspiracy". Comrade Martynov was anxious to have his hearers *forget* that the people I had been fighting *had not seen* any necessity for an *organisation of revolutionaries*, just as Comrade Akimov did not see it now.

(p. 245). This thesis is remarkably characteristic, for it "betrays", if one may so put it, *who* needs Martov's formulation and whom it will serve *in actual fact*—freelance intellectuals or workers' groups and the worker masses. The fact is that there are two possible interpretations of Martov's formulation: 1) that anyone who renders the Party regular personal assistance under the direction of one of its organisations is entitled to "*proclaim himself*" (Comrade Martov's own words) a Party member; 2) that a Party organisation is *entitled to regard* as a Party member anyone who renders it regular personal assistance under its direction. It is only the first interpretation that really gives "every striker" the opportunity to call himself a Party member, and accordingly *it alone* immediately won the hearts of the Liebers, Akimovs, and Martynovs. But this interpretation is manifestly no more than a phrase, because it would apply to the entire working class, and the distinction between Party and class would be obliterated; control over and direction of "every striker" can only be spoken of "symbolically". That is why, in his second speech, Comrade Martov at once slipped into the second interpretation (even though, be it said in parenthesis, *it was directly rejected by the Congress* when it turned down Kostich's resolution[20]—p.255), namely, that a committee would assign functions and watch over their fulfilment. Such special assignments will never, of course, be made to the *mass* of the workers, to the *thousands* of proletarians (of whom Comrade Axelrod and Comrade Martynov spoke)—they will frequently be given precisely to those *professors* whom Comrade Axelrod mentioned, to those *high-school students* for whom Comrade Lieber and Comrade Popov were so concerned (p. 241), and to the *revolutionary youth* to whom Comrade Axelrod referred in his second speech (p. 242). In a word, Comrade Martov's formula will either remain a dead letter, an empty phrase, or it will be of benefit mainly and almost exclusively to "*intellectuals who are thoroughly imbued with bourgeois individualism*" and do not wish to join an organisation. *In words,* Martov's formulation defends the interests of the broad strata of the proletariat, but *in fact* it serves the interests of the *bourgeois intellectuals,* who fight shy of proletarian discipline and organisation. No one will venture to deny

that *the intelligentsia, as a special stratum* of modern capitalist society, is characterised, by and large, *precisely by individualism* and incapacity for discipline and organisation (cf., for example, Kautsky's well-known articles on the intelligentsia). This, incidentally, is a feature which unfavourably distinguishes this social stratum from the proletariat; it is one of the reasons for the flabbiness and instability of the intellectual, which the proletariat so often feels; and this trait of the intelligentsia is intimately bound up with its customary mode of life, its mode of earning a livelihood, which in a great many respects approximates to the *petty-bourgeois mode of existence* (working in isolation or in very small groups, etc.). Nor is it fortuitous, lastly, that the defenders of Comrade Martov's formulation were the ones who had to cite the example of professors and high-school students! It was not champions of a broad proletarian struggle who, in the controversy over Paragraph 1, took the field against champions of a radically conspiratorial organisation, as Comrades Martynov and Axelrod thought, but the supporters of *bourgeois-intellectual individualism* who clashed with the supporters of *proletarian organisation and discipline.*

Comrade Popov said: "Everywhere, in St. Petersburg as in Nikolayev or Odessa, as the representatives from these towns testify, there are dozens of workers who are distributing literature and carrying on word-of-mouth agitation but who cannot be members of an organisation. They can be attached to an organisation, but not regarded as members" (p. 241). Why they cannot be members of an organisation remained Comrade Popov's secret. I have already quoted the passage from *A Letter to a Comrade* showing that the admission of all such workers (by the hundred, not the dozen) to an organisation is both possible and necessary, and, moreover, that a great many of these organisations can and should belong to the Party.

Comrade Martov's second argument: "In Lenin's opinion there should be no organisations in the Party other than Party organisations. . . ." Quite true! "In my opinion, on the contrary, such organisations should exist. Life creates and breeds organisations faster than we can include them in the hierarchy of our militant organisation of professional revolutionaries. . . ." That is untrue in two

respects: 1) the number of effective organisations of revolutionaries that "life" breeds is far less that we need, than the working-class movement requires; 2) our Party should be a hierarchy not only of organisations of revolutionaries, but of a mass of workers' organisations as well.... "Lenin thinks that the Central Committee will confer the title of Party organisations only on such as are fully reliable in the matter of principles. But Comrade Brouckère understands very well that life [*sic*!] will assert itself and that the Central Committee, in order not to leave a multitude of organisations outside the Party, will have to legitimise them despite their not quite reliable character: that is why Comrade Brouckère associates himself with Lenin...." What a truly tail-ist conception of "life"! Of course, if the Central Committee had *necessarily* to consist of people who were not guided by their own opinions, but by what others might say (*vide* the Organising Committee incident), then "life" would "assert itself" in the sense that the most backward elements in the Party would gain the upper hand (*as has in fact happened now when the backward elements have taken shape as the Party "minority"*). But no *intelligent* reason can be given which would induce a *sensible* Central Committee to admit "unreliable" elements to the Party. By this reference to "life", which "breeds" unreliable elements, Comrade Martov patently revealed the opportunist character of his plan of organisation!... "I for my part think," he continued, "that if such an organisation [one that is not quite reliable] is prepared to accept the Party programme and Party control, we may admit it to the Party, without thereby making it a Party organisation. I would consider it a great triumph for our Party if, for example, some union of 'independents' were to declare that they accepted the views of Social-Democracy and its programme and were joining the Party; which does not, however, mean that we would include the union in the Party organisation...." Such is the muddle Martov's formulation leads to: non-Party organisations belonging to the Party! Just imagine *his* scheme: the Party=1) organisations of revolutionaries, +2) workers' organisations recognised as Party organisations, +3) workers' organisations not recognised as Party organisations (consisting principally of "independents"), +4) individuals performing various functions—

professors, high-school students, etc., +5) "every striker". Alongside of this remarkable plan one can only put the words of Comrade Lieber: "Our task is not only to organise an organisation [!!]; we can and should organise a party" (p. 241). Yes, of course, we can and should do that, but what it requires is not meaningless words about "organising organisations", but the *unequivocal demand* that Party members should work to create an *organisation* in fact. He who talks about "organising a party" and yet defends using the word party to cover disorganisation and disunity of every kind is just indulging in empty words.

"Our formulation," Comrade Martov said, "expresses the desire to have a series of organisations between the organisation of revolutionaries and the masses." It does not. This truly essential desire is just what Martov's formulation *does not express,* for it *does not offer an incentive to organise,* does not contain a demand for organisation, does not separate organised from unorganised. All it offers is a *title,** and in this connection we cannot

---

* At the League Congress, Comrade Martov adduced one more argument in support of his formulation, an argument that deserves to be laughed at. "We might point out," he said, "that, taken literally, Lenin's formulation excludes the *agents of the Central Committee* from the Party, for they do not constitute an organisation" (p. 59). Even at the League Congress this argument was greeted with *laughter,* as the minutes record. Comrade Martov supposes that the "difficulty" he mentions can only be solved by including the Central Committee agents in "the organisation of the Central Committee". But that is not the point. The point is that Comrade Martov's example saliently demonstrates that *he completely fails to understand the idea of Paragraph 1;* it was a sheer specimen of pedantic criticism that did indeed deserve to be laughed at. *Formally speaking,* all that would be required would be to form an "organisation of Central Committee agents", pass a *resolution* to include it in the Party, and the "difficulty" which caused Comrade Martov so much brain-racking would immediately vanish. The *idea* of Paragraph 1 as formulated by me consists in the *incentive* to organise; it consists in *guaranteeing actual* control and direction. *Essentially,* the very question whether the Central Committee agents will belong to the Party is ridiculous, for *actual* control over them is fully and absolutely guaranteed *by the very fact that they have been appointed agents* and that they are kept on as agents. Consequently, here there can be no question of any confusion of organised and unorganised (which is the root mistake in Comrade Martov's formulation). Why Comrade Martov's formulation is no good is that it allows anyone, any opportunist, any windbag, any "professor", and any "high-school student" to *proclaim himself* a Party member. It is in vain for Comrade Martov to try to *talk away this Achilles' heel*

but recall Comrade Axelrod's words: "No decree can forbid them [circles of revolutionary youth and the like] or individuals to call themselves Social-Democrats [true enough!] and even to regard themselves as part of the Party"—now that is *not true at all*! It is impossible and *pointless* to forbid anyone to call himself a Social-Democrat, for in its *direct* sense this word only signifies a system of convictions, and not definite organisational relations. But as to forbidding various circles and persons to "regard themselves as part of the Party", that can and should be done if these circles and persons injure the Party, corrupt or disorganise it. It would be absurd to speak of the *Party* as of a whole, as of a political entity, if it could not "by decree forbid" a circle to "regard itself as part" of the whole! What in that case would be the point of defining the procedure and conditions of expulsion from the Party? Comrade Axelrod reduced Comrade Martov's fundamental mistake to an obvious absurdity; he even elevated this mistake to an *opportunist theory* when he added: "As formulated by Lenin, Paragraph 1 directly conflicts in principle with the very nature [!!] and aims of the Social-Democratic Party of the proletariat" (p. 243). This means nothing less than that making higher demands of the Party than of the class conflicts in principle with the very nature of the aims of the proletariat. It is not surprising that Akimov was heart and soul in favour of such a *theory*.

It should be said in fairness that Comrade Axelrod—who *now* wants to convert this mistaken formulation, one obviously tending towards opportunism, into the germ of *new* views—at the Congress, on the contrary, expressed a readiness to "bargain", saying: "But I observe that I am knocking at an open door" (I observe this in the new *Iskra* too), "because Comrade Lenin, with his peripheral circles which are to be regarded as part of the Party organisation, goes out to meet my demand." (And not only with the peripheral circles, but with every kind of workers' union: cf. p. 242 of the Minutes, the speech of Comrade Strakhov, and the passages from *What Is To Be Done?* and *A Letter to a Comrade* quoted above.) "There still remain the individuals, but here, too, we

of his formulation by examples in which there can be no question of people arbitrarily styling or proclaiming themselves members.

could bargain." I replied to Comrade Axelrod that, generally speaking, I was not averse to bargaining, and I must now explain in what sense this was meant. As regards the individuals—all those professors, high-school students, etc.—I would least of all have agreed to make concessions; but if doubts had been aroused as to the workers' organisations, I would have agreed (despite the utter groundlessness of such doubts, as I have proved above) to add to my Paragraph 1 a note to the following effect: "Workers' organisations which accept the Programme and Rules of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party should be included in the largest possible numbers among the Party organisations." Strictly speaking, of course, the place for such a recommendation is not in the Rules, which should be confined to statutory definitions, but in explanatory commentaries and pamphlets (and I have already pointed out that I gave such explanations in my pamphlets long before the Rules were drawn up); but at least such a note would not contain even a shadow of *wrong* ideas capable of leading to disorganisation, not a shadow of the *opportunist* arguments* and

---

* To this category of arguments, which inevitably crop up when attempts are made to justify Martov's formulation, belongs, in particular, Comrade Trotsky's statement (pp. 248 and 346) that "opportunism is produced by more complex [or: is determined by deeper] causes than one or another clause in the Rules; it is brought about by the relative level of development of bourgeois democracy and the proletariat...." The point is not that clauses in the Rules may produce opportunism, but that with their help a more or a less trenchant weapon against opportunism can be forged. The deeper its causes, the more trenchant should this weapon be. Therefore, to *justify* a formulation which opens the door to opportunism on the grounds that opportunism has "deep causes" is tail-ism of the first water. When Comrade Trotsky was opposed to Comrade Lieber, he understood that the Rules constitute the "organised distrust" of the whole towards the part, of the vanguard towards the backward contingent; but when Comrade Trotsky came to be on Comrade Lieber's side, he forgot this and even began to justify the *weakness* and instability of *our* organisation of this distrust (distrust of opportunism) by talking about "complex causes", the "level of development of the proletariat", etc. Here is another of Comrade Trotsky's arguments: "It is much easier for the intellectual youth, organised in one way or another, to *enter themselves* [my italics] on the rolls of the Party." Just so. That is why it is the formulation by which even unorganised elements may *proclaim themselves* Party members that suffers from intellectualist vagueness, and not my formulation, which *obviates* the right to "enter *oneself*" on the rolls. Comrade Trotsky said

"*anarchistic conceptions*" that are undoubtedly inherent in Comrade Martov's formulation.

This last expression, given by me in quotation marks, is that of Comrade Pavlovich, who quite justly characterised as *anarchism* the recognition of "*irresponsible* and *self-enrolled* Party members". "Translated into simple terms," said Comrade Pavlovich, explaining my formulation to Comrade Lieber, "it means: 'if you want to be a Party member, your acceptance of organisational relations too must be not merely platonic'." Simple as this "translation" was, it seems it was not superfluous (as events since the Congress have shown) not only for various dubious professors and high-school students, but for honest-to-goodness Party members, for people at the top.... With no less justice, Comrade Pavlovich pointed to the contradiction between Comrade Martov's formulation and the indisputable precept of scientific socialism which Comrade Martov quoted so unhappily: "Our Party is the conscious spokesman of an unconscious process." Exactly. And for that very reason it is wrong to want "every striker" to have the right to call himself a Party member, for if "every strike" were not only a spontaneous expres-

---

that if the Central Committee "refused to recognise" an organisation of opportunists, it would only be because of the character of certain individuals, and that since these individuals would be known, as political personalities, they would not be dangerous and could be removed by a general Party boycott. This is only true of cases when people have to be *removed from the Party* (and only half true at that, because an organised party *removes* members by a vote and not by a boycott). It is absolutely untrue of the far more frequent cases when *removal* would be absurd, and when all that is required is *control*. For purposes of control, the Central Committee might, on certain conditions, *deliberately* admit to the Party an organisation which was not quite reliable but which was capable of working; it might do so with the object of testing it, of trying to *direct it on to the right path*, of correcting its partial aberrations by guidance, etc. This would not be dangerous *if* in general "*self-entering*" on the Party rolls were not allowed. It would often be useful for an open and *responsible*, controlled expression (and discussion) of mistaken views and mistaken tactics. "But if statutory definitions are to correspond to actual relations, Comrade Lenin's formulation must be rejected," said Comrade Trotsky, and again he spoke like an opportunist. Actual relations are not a dead thing, they live and develop. Statutory definitions may correspond to the progressive development of those relations, but they may also (if the definitions are bad ones) "correspond" to retrogression or stagnation. The latter case is the "case" of Comrade Martov.

sion of the powerful class instinct and of the class struggle which is leading inevitably to the social revolution, but a *conscious expression* of that process, then... then the general strike would not be an anarchist phrase, then our Party would forthwith and at once *embrace* the whole working class, and, consequently, would at once put an end to *bourgeois society as a whole*. If it is to be a conscious spokesman *in fact*, the Party must be able to work out organisational relations that will *ensure a definite level* of consciousness and systematically raise this level. "If we are to go the way of Martov," Comrade Pavlovich said, "we should first of all delete the clause on accepting the *programme*, for before a programme can be accepted it must be mastered and understood.... Acceptance of the programme presupposes a fairly high level of political consciousness." We shall never allow *support* of Social-Democracy, *participation* in the struggle it directs, to be artificially *restricted* by any requirements (mastery, understanding, etc.), for this *participation* itself, the very fact of it, *promotes* both consciousness and the instinct for organisation; but since we have *joined together in a party* to carry on systematic work, we must see to it that it is systematic.

That Comrade Pavlovich's warning regarding the programme was not superfluous became apparent *at once*, during *that very same* sitting. Comrades Akimov and Lieber, who secured the adoption of Comrade Martov's formulation,* *at once* betrayed their true nature by demanding (pp. 254-55) that in the case of the programme too only platonic acceptance, acceptance only of its "basic principles", should be required (for "membership" in the Party). "Comrade Akimov's proposal is quite logical from Comrade Martov's standpoint," Comrade Pavlovich remarked. Unfortunately, we cannot see from the minutes *how many* votes this proposal of Akimov's secured—in

* The vote was twenty-eight for and twenty-two against. Of the eight anti-*Iskra*-ists, seven were for Martov and one for me. Without the aid of the opportunists, Comrade Martov would not have secured adoption of his opportunist formulation. (At the League Congress Comrade Martov tried very unsuccessfully to refute this undoubted fact, for some reason mentioning only the votes of the Bundists and forgetting about Comrade Akimov and his friends—or rather remembering them *only* when it could serve against me: Comrade Brouckère's agreement with me.)

all probability, not less than seven (five Bundists, Akimov, and Brouckère). And it was the withdrawal of *seven* delegates from the Congress that converted the "compact majority" (anti-*Iskra*-ists, "Centre", and Martovites) which began to form over Paragraph 1 of the Rules into a compact minority! It was the withdrawal of *seven* delegates that resulted in the defeat of the motion to endorse the old editorial board—that supposed howling violation of "continuity" in the *Iskra* editorship! A curious *seven* it was that constituted the sole salvation and guarantee of *Iskra* "continuity": the Bundists, Akimov, and Brouckère, that is, the very delegates who voted against the *motives* for adopting *Iskra* as the Central Organ, the very delegates whose opportunism was acknowledged dozens of times by the Congress, and acknowledged in particular by Martov and Plekhanov in the matter of *toning down* Paragraph 1 in reference to the programme. The "continuity" of *Iskra* guarded by the anti-*Iskra*-ists!—this brings us to the *starting-point* of the post-Congress tragicomedy.

* * *

The grouping of votes over Paragraph 1 of the Rules revealed a phenomenon of exactly the same type as the equality of languages incident: the falling away of one-quarter (approximately) of the *Iskra* majority made possible the victory of the anti-*Iskra*-ists, who were backed by the "Centre". Of course, here too there were individual votes which disturbed the full symmetry of the picture—in so large an assembly as our Congress there are bound to be some "strays" who shift quite fortuitously from one side to the other, especially on a question like Paragraph 1, where the true character of the divergence was only beginning to emerge and many delegates had simply *not yet found their bearings* (considering that the question had not been discussed beforehand in the press). Five votes fell away from the majority *Iskra*-ists (Rusov and Karsky with two votes each, and Lensky with one); on the other hand, they were joined by one anti-*Iskra*-ist (Brouckère) and by three from the Centre (Medvedev, Egorov and Tsaryov); the result was a total of twenty-three votes 24—5+4), one vote less than in the final grouping in the elections. *It was the anti-"Iskra"-ists who gave Martov his majority,* seven of them voting for him

and one for me (of the "Centre" too, seven voted for Martov, and three for me). That coalition of the minority *Iskra*-ists with the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Centre" which formed a compact minority at the end of the Congress and after the Congress *was beginning to take shape*. The political error of Martov and Axelrod, who *undoubtedly took a step towards opportunism and anarchistic individualism* in their formulation of Paragraph 1, and especially in their defence of that formulation, was revealed at once and very clearly thanks to the free and open arena offered by the Congress; it was revealed in the fact that the least stable elements, the least steadfast in principle, at once employed all their forces to widen the fissure, the breach, that appeared in the views of the revolutionary Social-Democrats. Working together at the Congress were people who in matters of organisation frankly pursued *different aims* (see Akimov's speech)—a circumstance which at once induced those who were *in principle* opposed to our organisational plan and our Rules to support the error of Comrades Martov and Axelrod. The *Iskra*-ists who on this question too remained faithful to the views of revolutionary Social-Democracy found themselves *in the minority*. This is a point of *the utmost importance*, for unless it is grasped it is absolutely impossible to understand either the struggle over the details of the Rules or the struggle over the personal composition of the Central Organ and the Central Committee.

j) Innocent Victims of a False Accusation of Opportunism

Before passing on to the subsequent discussion of the Rules, it is necessary, in order to elucidate our difference over the personal composition of the central institutions, to touch on the *private* meetings of the *Iskra* organisation during the Congress. The last and most important of these four meetings was held *just after* the vote on Paragraph 1 of the Rules—and thus the split in the *Iskra* organisation which took place at this meeting was in point of both time and logic a prelude to the subsequent struggle.

The *Iskra* organisation began to hold private meetings* soon after the Organising Committee incident, which

* I have already tried at the League Congress to give an account

gave rise to a discussion of possible candidates for the Central Committee. It stands to reason that, since binding instructions had been abolished, these meetings were purely in the nature of consultations and their decisions were not binding on anyone; but their importance was nevertheless immense. The selection of candidates for the Central Committee was a matter of considerable difficulty to delegates who were acquainted neither with the secret names nor with the inner work of the *Iskra* organisation, the organisation that had brought about actual Party unity and whose leadership of the practical movement was one of the motives for the official adoption of *Iskra*. We have already seen that, united, the *Iskra*-ists were fully assured a big majority at the Congress, as much as three-fifths, and all the delegates realised this very well. All the *Iskra*-ists, in fact, expected the "*Iskra*" *organisation* to make definite recommendations as to the personal composition of the Central Committee, and not one member of that organisation raised any objection to a preliminary discussion of the Central Committee's composition within it; not one of them so much as hinted at endorsing the entire membership of the Organising Committee, that is, converting that body into the Central Committee, or *even at conferring* with the Organising Committee as a whole regarding candidates for the Central Committee. This circumstance is also highly significant, and it is extremely important to bear it in mind, for *now, after the event,* the Martovites are zealously defending the Organising Committee, thereby only proving their political spinelessness for the hundredth and thousandth time.* Until the split over the composition of the central bodies led Martov to join forces with the Akimovs, everyone at the Congress clearly realised what any impartial person may easily ascertain from the Congress minutes and

of what took place at the private meetings, keeping to the barest essentials in order to avoid hopeless arguments. The principal facts are also set out in my *Letter to the Editors of "Iskra"* (p. 4). Comrade Martov did not challenge them in his *Reply*.

* Just reflect on this "picture of morals": the *delegate* from the *Iskra* organisation confers *at the Congress* with it *alone* and *does not hint*, even, at conferring with the Organising Committee. But after he is defeated both in this organisation and at the Congress, he begins to *regret* that the Organising Committee was not endorsed, to extol it retrospectively, and loftily to ignore the organisation that gave him his mandate! It may safely be vouched that no analogous

from the entire history of *Iskra*, namely, that the Organising Committee was *mainly* a commission set up to convene the Congress, a commission deliberately composed of representatives of different shades, including even the Bundists; while the real work of *creating* the organised unity of the Party was done entirely by the *Iskra* organisation. (It should be remembered also that quite by chance *several Iskra*-ists on the Organising Committee were absent from the Congress, either because they had been arrested or for other reasons "beyond their control".) The members of the *Iskra* organisation present at the Congress have already been enumerated in Comrade Pavlovich's pamphlet (see his *Letter on the Second Congress*, p. 13).[21]

The ultimate result of the heated debates in the *Iskra* organisation was the two votes I have already mentioned in my *Letter to the Editors*. The first vote: "by nine votes to four, with three abstentions, one of the candidates supported by Martov was rejected." What could be simpler and more natural, one would think, than such a fact: by the common consent of all the sixteen *Iskra* organisation members at the Congress, the possible candidates are discussed, and one of Comrade Martov's candidates is rejected by the majority (it was Comrade Stein, as Comrade Martov himself has now blurted out—*State of Siege*, p. 69). After all, one of the reasons why we assembled at the Party Congress was to discuss and decide to whom to entrust the "conductor's baton"—and it was the common duty of us all as Party members to give this item on the agenda the most serious attention, to decide this question from the standpoint of the *interests of the work*, and not of "philistine sentimentality", as Comrade Rusov quite rightly expressed it later. Of course, in discussing candidates *at the Congress*, we were bound to touch upon certain personal qualities, were bound to express our approval or disapproval,* especially at an unofficial and

---

instance will be found in the history of any really Social-Democratic and really working-class party.

* Comrade Martov bitterly complained at the League of the vehemence of my disapproval, failing to see that his complaint turned into an argument against himself. Lenin behaved—to use his own expression—frenziedly (League Minutes, p. 63). That is so. He banged the door. True. His conduct (at the second or third meeting of the *Iskra* organisation) aroused the indignation of the

intimate meeting. *And I have already pointed out at the League Congress* that it is absurd to think that a candidate is "disgraced" when he is not approved (League Minutes, p. 49), absurd to make a "scene" and go into hysterics over what forms part of a Party member's direct duty to select officials conscientiously and judiciously. And yet this was what put the fat in the fire as far as our minority are concerned, and they began *after the Congress* to clamour about "destroying reputations" (League Minutes, p. 70) and to assure *the broad public in print* that Comrade Stein had been the "chief figure" on the former Organising Committee and that he had been groundlessly accused of "diabolical schemes" (*State of Siege*, p. 69). Is it not hysterics to shout about "destroying reputations" in connection with the approval or disapproval of candidates? Is it not squabbling when people who have been defeated both at a private meeting of the *Iskra* organisation and at the official supreme assembly of the Party, the Congress, begin to complain to all and sundry and recommend rejected candidates to the worthy public as "chief figures", and when they then try to force their candidates upon the Party by causing a split and demanding *co-optation*? In our musty émigré atmosphere political concepts have become so confused that Comrade Martov is no longer able to distinguish Party duty from personal and circle allegiance! It is bureaucracy and formalism, we are to believe, to think it proper to discuss and decide upon candidates *only* at congresses, where delegates assemble primarily for the discussion of important questions of principle, where representatives of the movement assemble who are able to treat the question of personalities impartially, and who are able (and in duty bound) to *demand* and gather all necessary information about the candidates before casting their decisive votes, and where the assignment of a certain place to arguments over the

---

members who remained at the meeting. It did. But what follows? Only that my arguments on the substance of the questions in dispute were convincing and were borne out by the course of the Congress. For if, in fact, nine of the sixteen members of the *Iskra* organisation in the end sided with me, clearly this was so *notwithstanding* and *in spite of* my reprehensible vehemence. Hence, had it not been for this "vehemence", perhaps even more than nine would have sided with me. The more "indignation" my arguments and facts had to overcome, the more convincing they must have been.

conductor's baton is natural and essential. Instead of this bureaucratic and formal view, new usages and customs have now become the thing: we are, after congresses, to talk right and left about the political burial of Ivan Ivanovich or the destroyed reputation of Ivan Nikiforovich[22]; writers are to recommend candidates in pamphlets, while beating their breasts and hypocritically asserting: "This is not a circle, it is a party...." Those of the reading public who have a taste for scandal will eagerly savour the sensational news that, on the assurance of Martov himself,* so-and-so was the chief figure on the Organising Committee. This reading public is far more competent to discuss and decide the question than formalistic institutions like congresses, with their grossly mechanical decisions by majority vote.... Yes, there are still veritable Augean stables[23] of émigré squabbling for our real Party workers to clean up!

Second vote of the *Iskra* organisation: "by ten votes to two, with four abstentions, a list of five [candidates for the Central Committee] was adopted which, on my proposal, included one leader of the non-*Iskra*-ist elements and one leader of the *Iskra*-ist minority."** This vote is of the utmost importance, for it clearly and irrefutably proves the utter falsity of the fables which were built up later, in the atmosphere of squabbling, to the effect that we wanted to eject the non-*Iskra*-ists from the Party or set them aside, that what the majority did was to pick candidates from only one half of the Congress and have them elected by that half, etc. All this is sheer falsehood. The vote I have cited shows that we did not exclude the non-*Iskra*-ists even from the Central Committee, let alone the Party, and that we allowed our opponents a very

---

* I, too, like Martov, tried in the *Iskra* organisation to get a certain candidate nominated to the Central Committee and failed, a candidate of whose splendid reputation before and at the beginning of the Congress, as borne out by outstanding facts, I too could speak. But it has never entered my head. This comrade *has sufficient self-respect not to allow* anybody, after the Congress, to nominate him in print or to complain about political burials, destroyed reputations, etc.

** See "Why I resigned from the *Iskra* Editorial Board" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 7, pp. 120-21).—*Ed.*

substantial *minority*. The whole point is that they *wanted to have a majority*, and when this modest wish was not gratified, they started a *row* and refused to be represented on the central bodies at all. That such was the case, Comrade Martov's assertions at the League notwithstanding, is shown by the following *letter* which the minority of the *Iskra* organisation addressed to us, the majority of the *Iskra*-ists (and the majority at the Congress after the withdrawal of the seven), shortly after the Congress adopted Paragraph 1 of the Rules (it should be noted that the *Iskra* organisation meeting I have been speaking of was the *last*: after it, the organisation *actually* broke up and each side tried to convince the other Congress delegates that it was in the right).

Here is the text of the letter:

"Having heard the explanation of delegates Sorokin and Sablina regarding the wish of the majority of the editorial board and the Emancipation of Labour group to attend the meeting [on such and such a date],* and having with the help of these delegates established that at the previous meeting a list of Central Committee candidates was read which was supposed to have come from us, and which was used to misrepresent our whole *political* position; and bearing in mind also that, firstly, this list was attributed to us without any attempt to ascertain its real origin; that, secondly, this circumstance is undoubtedly connected with the accusation of opportunism openly circulated against the majority of the *Iskra* editorial board and of the Emancipation of Labour group; and that, thirdly, this accusation is, as is perfectly clear to us, connected with a quite definite plan to *change the composition of the 'Iskra' editorial board*—we consider that the explanation given us of the reasons for excluding us from the meeting is unsatisfactory, and that the refusal to admit us to the meeting is proof of not wanting to give us the opportunity to refute the above-mentioned false accusations.

"As to the possibility of our reaching agreement on a joint list of candidates for the Central Committee, we declare that the only list we can accept as the basis for agreement is: Popov, Trotsky, and

* According to my reckoning, the date mentioned in the letter was a Tuesday. The meeting took place on Tuesday evening, that is, *after* the 28th sitting of the Congress. This chronological point is very important. It is a *documentary refutation* of Comrade Martov's opinion that we parted company over the organisation of the central bodies, and not over their personal composition. It is *documentary proof* of the correctness of my statement of the case at the League Congress and in the *Letter to the Editors. After the 28th* sitting of the Congress, Comrades Martov and Starover had a great deal to say about a false accusation of opportunism, but *did not say a word* about the differences over the composition of the Council or over co-optation to the central bodies (which we argued about at the 25th, 26th, and 27th sittings).

Glebov. Furthermore, we emphasise that this is a *compromise* list, since the inclusion of Comrade Glebov is to be viewed only as a concession to the wishes of the majority; for now that the role he has played at the Congress is clear to us, *we do not consider Comrade Glebov* a person satisfying the requirements that should be made of a candidate for the Central Committee.

"At the same time, we stress that our entering into negotiations regarding the candidates for the Central Committee has no bearing whatever on the question of the composition of the editorial board of the Central Organ, as on this question (the composition of the editorial board) we are not prepared to enter into any negotiations.

"On behalf of the comrades, Martov and Starover"

This letter, which accurately reproduces the frame of mind of the disputing sides and the state of the dispute, takes us at once to the "heart" of the incipient split and reveals its real causes. The minority of the *Iskra* organisation, having refused to agree with the majority and preferred freedom of agitation at the Congress (to which they were, of course, fully entitled), nevertheless tried to induce the "delegates" of the majority to admit them to their private meeting! Naturally, this amusing demand only met with a smile and a shrug at our meeting (where the letter was of course read), and the outcry, bordering on hysterics, about "false accusations of opportunism" evoked outright laughter. But let us first examine Martov's and Starover's bitter complaints point by point.

The list had been wrongly attributed to them; their political position was being misrepresented.—But, as Martov himself has admitted (League Minutes, p. 64), it never occurred to me to doubt the truth of his statement that he was not the author of the list. In general, the authorship of the list has nothing to do with the case, and whether the list was drawn up by some *Iskra*-ist or by some representative of the "Centre", etc.. is of absolutely no importance. The important thing is that this list, which consisted entirely of members of the present minority, circulated at the Congress, if only as a mere guess or conjecture. Lastly, *the most important thing of all* is that at the Congress Comrade Martov *was obliged* to dissociate himself with the utmost vehemence from *such* a list, a list which he now *would be bound* to greet with delight. Nothing could more saliently exemplify instability in the evaluation of people and shades than this right-about-face in the course of a couple of months from howling

about "defamatory rumours" to forcing on the Party central body the very candidates who figure in this supposedly defamatory list!*

This list, Comrade Martov said at the League Congress, "politically implied a coalition between us and *Yuzhny Rabochy*, on the one hand, and the Bund, on the other, a coalition in the sense of a *direct agreement*" (p. 64). That is not true, for, firstly, the Bund would never have entered into an "agreement" about a list which did not include a single Bundist; and, secondly, there was *and could have been no question* of a direct agreement (which was what Martov thought disgraceful) even with the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group, let alone the Bund. It was not an agreement but a coalition that was in question; not that Comrade Martov had made a deal, but that he *was bound to have the support* of those very anti-*Iskra*-ists and unstable elements whom he had fought during the first half of the Congress and who had seized upon his error over Paragraph 1 of the Rules. The letter I have quoted proves incontrovertibly that the *root* of the "grievance" lay in the *open, and moreover false, accusation of opportunism.* This "accusation" which put the fat in the fire, and which Comrade Martov *now* so carefully steers clear of, in spite of my reminder in the *Letter to the Editors,* was twofold. Firstly, during the discussion of Paragraph 1 of the Rules Plekhanov bluntly declared that Paragraph 1 was a question of "keeping away" from us "every kind of representative of opportunism", and that my draft, as a bulwark against their invading the Party, "should, if only for that reason, receive the votes of all enemies of opportunism" (Congress Minutes, p. 246). These vigorous words, even though I softened them down a little (p. 250),** caused a sensation, which was clearly expressed in the speeches of Comrades Rusov (p. 247), Trotsky (p. 248), and Akimov (p. 253). In the "lobby" of our "parliament", Plekhanov's thesis was keenly commented on and varied in a thousand ways in endless arguments over Paragraph 1. But instead of defending their case on its merits, our dear comrades as-

* These lines were already set up when we received news of the incident of Comrade Gusev and Comrade Deutsch. We shall examine this incident separately in an *appendix.* (See pp. 211-20 of the present edition.—*Ed.*)

** See "Second Speech in the Discussion on the Party Rules, August 2(15)" (*Collected Works,* Vol. 6, pp. 501-02).—*Ed.*

sumed a ludicrous air of injury and even went to the length of complaining in writing about a "false accusation of opportunism"!

Their narrow circle mentality and astonishing immaturity as Party members, which cannot stand the fresh breeze of open controversy in the presence of all, is here clearly revealed. It is the mentality so familiar to the Russian, as expressed in the old saying: either coats off, or let's have your hand! These people are so accustomed to the bell-jar seclusion of an intimate and snug little circle that they almost fainted as soon as a person spoke up in a free and open arena on his own responsibility. Accusations of opportunism!—against whom? Against the Emancipation of Labour group, and its majority at that—can you imagine anything more terrible? Either split the Party on account of this ineffaceable insult, or hush up this "domestic unpleasantness" by restoring the "continuity" of the bell-jar—this alternative is already pretty clearly indicated in the letter we are examining. Intellectualist individualism and the circle mentality had come into conflict with the requirement of open speaking before the Party. Can you imagine such an absurdity, such a squabble, such a complaint about "*false* accusations of opportunism" in the German party? There, proletarian organisation and discipline weaned them from such intellectualist flabbiness long ago. Nobody has anything but the profoundest respect for Liebknecht, let us say; but how they would have laughed over there at *complaints* that he (together with Bebel) was "openly accused of opportunism" at the 1895 Congress,[24] when, on the agrarian question, he found himself in the bad company of the notorious opportunist Vollmar and his friends. Liebknecht's name is inseparably bound up with the history of the German working-class movement not, of course, because he happened to stray into opportunism on such a comparatively minor and specific question, but in spite of it. And similarly, in spite of all the acrimony of the struggle, the name of Comrade Axelrod, say, inspires respect in every Russian Social-Democrat, and always will; but not because Comrade Axelrod happened to defend an opportunist idea at the Second Congress of our Party, happened to dig out old anarchistic rubbish at the Second Congress of the League, but in spite of it. Only the most

hidebound circle mentality, with its logic of "either coats off, or let's have your hand", could give rise to hysterics, squabbles, and a Party split because of a "false accusation of opportunism against the majority of the Emancipation of Labour group".

The other element of this terrible accusation is intimately connected with the preceding (Comrade Martov tried in vain at the League Congress [p. 63] to evade and hush up *one* side of this incident). It relates in fact to that *coalition* of the anti-*Iskra*-ist and wavering elements with Comrade Martov which *began to emerge* in connection with Paragraph 1 of the Rules. Naturally, there was no agreement, direct or indirect, between Comrade Martov and the anti-*Iskra*-ists, nor could there have been, and nobody suspected him of it: it only seemed so to him in his fright. But *politically* his error was revealed in the fact that people who undoubtedly gravitated towards opportunism began to form around him an ever more solid and "compact" majority (which has now become a minority *only* because of the "accidental" withdrawal of seven delegates). We pointed to this "coalition", also *openly*, of course, immediately after the matter of Paragraph 1—both at the Congress (see Comrade Pavlovich's remark already quoted: Congress Minutes, p. 255) and in the *Iskra* organisation (Plekhanov, as I recall, pointed to it in particular). It is literally the same point and the same jibe as was addressed by Clara Zetkin to Bebel and Liebknecht in 1895, when she said: "*Es tut mir in der Seele weh, dass ich dich in der Gesellschaft seh*' " ("It cuts me to the quick to see you [i.e., Bebel] in such company [i.e., of Vollmar and Co.]"[25]). It is strange, to be sure, that Bebel and Liebknecht did not send a hysterical message to Kautsky and Zetkin complaining of a false accusation of opportunism. . . .

As to the list of candidates for the Central Committee, this letter shows that Comrade Martov was mistaken in declaring at the League that the refusal to come to an agreement with us was not yet final—another example of how unwise it is in a political struggle to attempt to reproduce the *spoken word* from memory, instead of relying on documents. Actually, the "minority" were so modest as to present the "majority" with an ultimatum: take two from the "minority" and one (by way of compromise and *only*

as a concession, properly speaking!) from the "majority". This is monstrous, but it is a fact. And this fact clearly shows how absurd are the fables now being spread to the effect that the "majority" picked representatives of only one half of the Congress and got them elected by that one half. *Just the opposite*: the Martovites offered us one out of three only as a concession, consequently, in the event of our not agreeing to this unique "concession", they wanted to get *all* the seats filled by their own candidates! At our private meeting we had a good laugh at the Martovites' modesty and drew up a list of our own: Glebov—Travinsky (subsequently elected to the Central Committee)—*Popov*. For the latter we then substituted (also at a private meeting of the twenty-four) Comrade Vasilyev (subsequently elected to the Central Committee) *only because* Comrade Popov refused, first in private conversation and then openly at the Congress (p. 338), to be included in our list.

That is how matters really stood.

The modest "minority" modestly wished to be in the majority. When this modest wish was not met, the "minority" were pleased to decline altogether and to start a row. Yet there are people who now talk pontifically about the "intransigence" of the "majority"!

Entering the fray in the arena of free agitation at the Congress, the "minority" presented the "majority" with amusing ultimatums. Having suffered defeat, *our heroes burst into tears and began to cry out about a state of siege. Voilà tout.*

The terrible accusation that we intended to change the composition of the editorial board was also greeted with a smile (at our private meeting of the twenty-four): from the very beginning of the Congress, and even before the Congress, everybody had known perfectly well of the plan to *reconstitute* the editorial board by electing an initial trio (I shall speak of this in greater detail when I come to the election of the editorial board at the Congress). That the "minority" took fright at this plan *after* they saw its correctness splendidly confirmed by their coalition with the anti-*Iskra*-ists did not surprise us—it was quite natural. Of course, we could not take seriously the proposal that we should of our own free will, without a fight at the Congress, convert ourselves into a minority; nor could we

take seriously this whole letter, the authors of which had reached such an incredible state of exasperation as to speak of "false accusations of opportunism". We confidently hoped that their sense of Party duty would very soon get the better of the natural desire to "vent their spleen".

k) Continuation of the Debate on the Rules. Composition of the Council

The succeeding clauses of the Rules aroused far more controversy over details than over principles of organisation. The 24th sitting of the Congress was entirely devoted to the question of representation at Party congresses, and again a decided and definite struggle against the common plans of all the *Iskra*-ists was waged only by the Bundists (Goldblatt and Lieber, pp. 258-59) and Comrade Akimov, who with praiseworthy frankness admitted his role at the Congress: "Every time I speak, I do so fully realising that my arguments will not influence the comrades, but will on the contrary damage the point I am trying to defend" (p. 261). Coming just after Paragraph 1 of the Rules, this apt remark was particularly appropriate; only the words "on the contrary" were not quite in order here, for Comrade Akimov was able not only to damage various points, but at the same time, and by so doing, to "influence the comrades"... those very inconsistent *Iskra*-ists who inclined toward opportunist phrase-mongering.

Well, in the upshot Paragraph 3 of the Rules, which defines the conditions of representation at congresses, was adopted by a majority with seven abstentions (p. 263)—anti-*Iskra*-ists, evidently.

The arguments over the composition of the Council, which took up the greater part of the 25th Congress sitting, revealed an extraordinary number of groupings around a multitude of proposals. Abramson and Tsaryov rejected the plan for a Council altogether. Panin insisted on making the Council a court of arbitration exclusively, and therefore quite consistently moved to delete the definition that the Council is the supreme institution and that it may be summoned by any two of its members.* Hertz and Ru-

* Apparently, Comrade Starover also inclined to the view of Comrade Panin, only with the difference that the latter knew what

sov advocated differing methods of constituting the Council, in addition to the *three* methods proposed by the *five* members of the Rules Committee.

The questions in dispute reduced themselves primarily to definition of the Council's functions: whether it was to be a court of arbitration or the supreme institution of the Party. Comrade Panin, as I have said, was consistently in favour of the former. But he stood alone. Comrade Martov vigorously opposed this: "I propose that the motion to delete the words, 'the Council is the supreme institution,' be rejected. Our formulation [i.e., the formulation of the Council's functions that we had agreed on in the Rules Committee] deliberately leaves open the possibility of the Council developing into the supreme Party institution. For us, the Council is not merely a conciliation board." Yet the composition of the Council as proposed by Comrade Martov was solely and exclusively that of a "conciliation board" or court of arbitration: two members from each of the central bodies and a fifth to be invited by these four. Not only such a composition of the Council, but even that adopted by the Congress on the motion of Comrades Rusov and Hertz (the fifth member to be appointed by the Congress), answers the sole purpose of conciliation or mediation. Between such a composition of the Council and its mission of becoming the supreme Party institution there is an irreconcilable contradiction. The composition of the supreme Party institution should be constant, and not dependent on chance changes (sometimes owing to arrests) in the composition of the central bodies. The supreme institution should stand in direct relation to the Party Congress, receiving its powers from the latter, and not from two other Party institutions subordinate to the Congress. The supreme institution should consist of persons known to the Party Congress. Lastly, the *supreme* institution should not be *organised* in a way that makes *its very existence* dependent on chance—the two bodies fail to agree on the selection of the fifth member, and the Party is left without a supreme institution! To this it was objected:

---

he wanted and quite consistently moved resolutions aimed at converting the Council into a pure arbitration or conciliation body, whereas Comrade Starover did not know what he wanted when he said that according to the draft the Council could meet "only on the wish of the parties" (p. 266). That was quite incorrect.

1) that if one of the five were to abstain and the remaining four were to divide equally, the position might also prove a hopeless one (Egorov). This objection is unfounded, for the impossibility of *adopting a decision* is something that is inevitable at times in the case of *any* body, but that is quite different from the impossibility of *forming* the body. Second objection: "if an institution like the Council proves incapable of selecting the fifth member, it will mean that it is ineffectual in general" (Zasulich). But the point here is not that it will be ineffectual, but that there will be no *supreme* institution at all: without the fifth member, *there will be no* Council, there will be *no "institution"*, and the question of whether it is effectual or not will not even arise. Lastly, if the trouble were that it might not be possible to form some Party body over which stood another, higher body, that would be remediable, for in urgent cases the higher body could fill the gap in one way or another. But there is *no* body above the Council except the Congress, and therefore to frame the Rules in such a way that it *might not even be possible to form* the Council would obviously be illogical.

Both my brief speeches at the Congress on this question were devoted to an examination (pp. 267 and 269) *only of these two* wrong objections which Martov and other comrades adduced in defence of his proposal. As to the question of the Central Organ or the Central Committee predominating on the Council, *I did not even touch on it.* This question was brought up, as early as the 14th sitting of the Congress (p. 157), by *Comrade Akimov*, he being the *first* to talk of the danger of the Central Organ predominating; and Comrades Martov, Axelrod, and others, *after the Congress*, were only following in *Akimov's* footsteps when they invented the absurd and demagogic story that the "majority" wanted to convert the Central Committee into a tool of the editorial board. When he dealt with this question in his *State of Siege*, Comrade Martov modestly avoided mentioning its real initiator!

Anybody who cares to acquaint himself with the *entire* treatment at the Party Congress of the question of the Central Organ predominating over the Central Committee, and is not content with isolated quotations torn from their context, will easily perceive how Comrade Martov has distorted the matter. *It was none other than Comrade*

Popov who, as early as the 14th sitting, started a polemic *against the views of Comrade Akimov*, who wanted "the 'strictest centralisation' at the top of the Party *in order to weaken the influence of the Central Organ*" (p. 154; my italics), "which in fact is the whole meaning of this [Akimov's] system". "Far from defending such centralisation," Comrade Popov added, "I am prepared to combat it with every means in my power, because it is *the banner of opportunism.*" There you have the *root* of the famous question of the Central Organ predominating over the Central Committee, and it is not surprising that Comrade Martov is now *obliged* to pass over the true origin of the question in silence. *Even* Comrade Popov could not fail to discern the *opportunist* character of Akimov's talk about the predominance of the Central Organ,* and in order thoroughly to dissociate himself from Comrade Akimov, Comrade Popov *categorically* declared: "Let there be three members from the editorial board on this central body [the Council] and two from the Central Committee. *That is a secondary question.* [My italics.] The important thing is that the leadership, the supreme leadership of the Party, should proceed from one source" (p. 155). Comrade Akimov objected: "Under the draft, the Central Organ is ensured predominance on the Council if only because the composition of the editorial board is constant whereas that of the Central Committee is changeable" (p. 157)—an argument which only relates to "constancy" of leadership in matters of *principle* (which is a normal and desirable thing), and certainly not to "predominance" in the sense of interference or encroachment on independence. And Comrade Popov, who at that time did not yet belong

* Neither Comrade Popov nor Comrade Martov hesitated to call Comrade Akimov an opportunist; they only began to take exception and grow indignant when this appellation was applied *to them*, and applied justly, in connection with "equality of languages" or Paragraph 1. Comrade Akimov, in whose footsteps Comrade Martov has followed, was however able to conduct himself with greater dignity and manhood at the Party Congress than Comrade Martov and Co. at the League Congress. "I have been called an opportunist here," said Comrade Akimov at the Party Congress. "I personally consider this an abusive and offensive term and believe that I have done nothing to deserve it. However, I am not protesting" (p. 296). Can it be that Comrades Martov and Starover invited Comrade Akimov to subscribe to their protest against the false accusation of opportunism, but that Comrade Akimov declined?

to a "minority" which masks its dissatisfaction with the composition of the central bodies by spreading tales of the Central Committee's lack of independence, told Comrade Akimov quite logically: "I propose that it [the Council] be regarded as the directing centre of the Party, in which case *it will be entirely unimportant whether there are more representatives on the Council from the Central Organ or from the Central Committee*" (pp. 157-58; my italics).

When the discussion of the composition of the Council was resumed at the 25th sitting, Comrade Pavlovich, continuing the old debate, pronounced in favour of the predominance of the Central Organ over the Central Committee "in view of the former's stability" (p. 264). It was stability in matters of *principle* that he had in mind, and that was how he was understood by Comrade Martov, who, speaking immediately after Comrade Pavlovich, considered it unnecessary to "fix the preponderance of one institution over the other" and pointed to the possibility of one of the Central Committee members residing abroad, "whereby the stability of the Central Committee in matters of principle would to some extent be preserved" (p. 264). Here there is not yet even a trace of the demagogic *confusion* of stability in matters of *principle*, and its preservation, with the preservation of the independence and initiative of the Central Committee. *At the Congress* this confusion, which *since the Congress* has practically become Comrade Martov's trump card, was furthered *only by Comrade Akimov*, who *already at that time* spoke of the "Arakcheyev spirit of the Rules"[26] (p. 268), and said that "*if three members of the Party Council were to be from the Central Organ, the Central Committee would be converted into a mere tool of the editorial board.* [My italics.] Three persons residing abroad would obtain the unrestricted [!!] right to order the work of the entire[!!] Party. Their security would be guaranteed, and their power would therefore be lifelong" (p. 268). It was with this absolutely absurd and demagogic talk, in which *ideological leadership is called interference in the work of the entire Party* (and which after the Congress provided a cheap slogan for Comrade Axelrod with his talk about "theocracy")—it was *with this* that Comrade Pavlovich again took issue when he stressed that he stood "for the

stability and purity of the principles represented by *Iskra*. By giving preponderance to the editorial board of the Central Organ I want to fortify these principles" (p. 268).

That is how the celebrated question of the predominance of the Central Organ over the Central Committee really stands. This famous "difference of principle" on the part of Comrades Axelrod and Martov is nothing but *a repetition of the opportunist and demagogic talk of Comrade Akimov*, the true character of which was clearly detected even by Comrade Popov, in the days when he had not yet suffered defeat over the composition of the central bodies!

* * *

To sum up the question of the composition of the Council: despite Comrade Martov's attempts in his *State of Siege* to prove that my statement of the case in the *Letter to the Editors* is contradictory and incorrect, the minutes of the Congress clearly show that, *in comparison* with Paragraph 1, this question was indeed only a *detail*, and that the assertion in the article "Our Congress" (*Iskra*, No. 53) that we argued "almost exclusively" about the organisation of the Party's central institutions is a *complete distortion*. It is a distortion all the more outrageous since the author of the article *entirely ignores the controversy over Paragraph 1*. Further, that there was no definite grouping of the *Iskra*-ists over the composition of the Council is also borne out by the minutes: there were no roll-call votes; Martov differed with Panin; I found common ground with Popov; Egorov and Gusev took up a separate stand, and so on. Finally, my last statement (at the Congress of the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad), to the effect that the Martovites' coalition with the anti-*Iskra*-ists grew steadily stronger, *is also borne out* by Comrade Martov's and Comrade Axelrod's swing towards Comrade Akimov—now apparent to everyone—on this question as well.

1) Conclusion of the Debate on the Rules. Co-optation to the Central Bodies. Withdrawal of the RABOCHEYE DYELO Delegates

Of the subsequent debate on the Rules (26th sitting of the Congress), only the question of restricting the powers of the Central Committee is worth mentioning, for it

throws light on the character of the attacks the Martovites are *now* making on hypercentralism. Comrades Egorov and Popov strove for the restriction of centralism with rather more conviction, irrespective of their own candidature or that of those they supported. When the question was still in the Rules Commission, they moved that the right of the Central Committee to dissolve local committees be made contingent on the consent of the Council and, in addition, be limited to cases specially enumerated (p. 272, note 1). This was opposed by three members of the Rules Commission (Glebov, Martov, and myself), and at the Congress Comrade Martov upheld our view (p. 273) and answered Egorov and Popov by saying that "the Central Committee would in any case deliberate before deciding on so serious a step as the dissolution of an organisation". As you see, *at that time* Comrade Martov still turned a deaf ear to *every* anti-centralist scheme, and the Congress rejected the proposal of Egorov and Popov—only unfortunately the minutes do not tell us by how many votes.

At the Party Congress, Comrade Martov was also "against substituting the word 'endorses' for the word 'organises' [the Central Committee organises committees, etc.— Paragraph 6 of the Party Rules]. It must be given the right to organise as well." That is what Comrade Martov said *then,* not having yet hit on the wonderful idea that the concept "organise" does not include endorsement, which he discovered only at the League Congress.

Apart from these two points, the debate over Paragraphs 5-11 of the Rules (Minutes, pp. 273-76) is hardly of any interest, being confined to quite minor arguments over details. Then came Paragraph 12—the question of co-optation to all Party bodies in general and to the central bodies in particular. The commission proposed raising the majority required for co-optation from two-thirds to four-fifths. Glebov, who presented its report, moved that decisions to co-opt to the Central Committee must be *unanimous.* Comrade Egorov, while acknowledging *dissonances* undesirable stood for a simple majority in the absence of a reasoned veto. Comrade Popov agreed neither with the commission nor with Comrade Egorov and demanded either a simple majority (without the right of veto) or unanimity. Comrade Martov agreed neither with the com-

mission, nor with Glebov, nor with Egorov, nor with Popov, declaring against unanimity, against four-fifths (in favour of two-thirds), and *against "mutual co-optation", that is, the right of the editorial board of the Central Organ to protest a co-optation to the Central Committee and vice versa* ("the right of mutual control over co-optation").

As the reader sees, the groupings were highly variegated and the differences so numerous as almost to lend "uniqueness" to the views of each delegate!

Comrade Martov said: "I admit the psychological impossibility of working with unpleasant persons. But it is also important for our organisation to be virile and effectual. . . . The right of the Central Committee and the editorial board of the Central Organ to mutual control in cases of co-optation is unnecessary. It is not because I think that one is not competent in the sphere of the other that I am against it. No! The editorial board of the Central Organ, for instance, might give the Central Committee sound advice as to whether Mr. Nadezhdin, say, should be admitted to the Central Committee. I object because I do not want to create mutually exasperating red tape."

I objected: "There are two questions here. The first is that of the required majority, and I am against lowering it from four-fifths to two-thirds. The stipulation for a reasoned protest is not expedient, and I am against it. Incomparably more important is the second question, the right of the Central Committee and the Central Organ to mutual control over co-optation. The mutual consent of the two central bodies is an essential condition for harmony. What is involved here is a possible rupture between the two central bodies. Whoever does not want a split should be concerned to safeguard harmony. We know from the history of the Party that there have been people who caused splits. It is a question of principle, a very important question, one on which the whole future of the Party may depend" (pp. 276-77). That is the full text of the summary of my speech as recorded at the Congress, a speech to which Comrade Martov attaches particularly serious importance. Unfortunately, although attaching serious importance to it, he did not take the trouble to consider it in connection with the whole debate and the whole political situation at the Congress at the moment it was made.

The first question that arises is why, in my original draft (see p. 394, Paragraph 11),* I stipulated a majority of only two-thirds and did not demand mutual control over co-optation to the central bodies. Comrade Trotsky, who spoke after me (p. 277), did in fact at once raise this question.

The answer to it is given in my speech at the League Congress and in Comrade Pavlovich's letter on the Second Congress. Paragraph 1 of the Rules "broke the pot" and it had to be bound tight with a "double knot"—I said at the League Congress. That meant, firstly, that on a purely theoretical question Martov had proved to be an opportunist, and his mistake had been *upheld* by Lieber and Akimov. It meant, secondly, that the coalition of the Martovites (that is, an insignificant minority of the *Iskra*-ists) with the anti-*Iskra*-ists ensured them *a majority at the Congress* in the voting on the personal composition of the central bodies. And it was about the *personal composition* of the central bodies that I was speaking here, emphasising the need for harmony and *warning against "people who cause splits"*. This warning was indeed of important significance in principle, for the *Iskra* organisation (which was undoubtedly best qualified to judge about the personal composition of the central bodies, having as it did the closest practical acquaintance with all affairs and with all the candidates) had already made its recommendations on this subject and had taken the decision we know regarding the candidates who aroused its misgivings. Both morally and on its merits (that is, its competence to judge), the *Iskra* organisation should have had the decisive say in this delicate matter. But *formally speaking*, of course, Comrade Martov had every right to appeal to the Liebers and Akimovs *against* the majority of the *Iskra* organisation. And in his brilliant speech on Paragraph 1, Comrade Akimov had said with remarkable explicitness and sagacity that whenever he perceived a difference among the *Iskra*-ists over the methods of achieving their common *Iskra* aim, he consciously and deliberately *voted for the worse method*, because his, Akimov's, aims were diametrically opposed to those of the *Iskra*-ists. There could not be the *slightest doubt* therefore that, quite ir-

---

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 477.—*Ed.*

respective of the wishes and intentions of Comrade Martov, *it was the worse composition of the central bodies* that would obtain the support of the Liebers and Akimovs. They *could vote*, they were bound to vote (judging by their *deeds*, by their vote on Paragraph 1, and not by their words) precisely for that list which would promise the presence of "people who cause splits", and would do so *in order to* "cause splits". Is it surprising, in view of this situation, that I said that it was an important question of principle (harmony between the two central bodies), one on which the whole future of the Party might depend?

No Social-Democrat at all acquainted with the *Iskra* ideas and plans and with the history of the movement, and at all earnest in sharing those ideas, could doubt for a moment that while formally it was quite right and proper for the dispute within the *Iskra* organisation over the composition of the central bodies to be decided by the Liebers and Akimovs, this would ensure the *worst* possible results. It was imperative to *fight to avert* these worst possible results.

How were we to fight them? We did not fight by hysterics and rows, of course, but by methods which were *quite loyal and quite legitimate:* perceiving that we were in the minority (as on the question of Paragraph 1), *we appealed to the Congress to protect the rights of the minority*. Greater strictness as regards the majority required for adoption of members (four-fifths instead of two-thirds), the requirement of unanimity for co-optation, mutual control over co-optation to the central bodies—all this we began to advocate *when we found ourselves in the minority on the question of the personal composition of the central bodies.* This fact is constantly ignored by the Ivans and Peters who are so ready to give opinions on the Congress lightly, after a couple of chats with friends, without seriously studying *all* the minutes and all the "testimony" of the persons concerned. Yet anybody who cares to make a conscientious study of these minutes and this testimony will inevitably encounter the fact I have mentioned, namely, that the *root* of the dispute *at that moment of the Congress* was the *personal composition of the central bodies,* and that we strove for stricter conditions of control just because we were in the minority and wanted "a double knot to bind tight the pot" broken by Martov

amid the jubilation and with the jubilant assistance of the Liebers and the Akimovs.

"If it were not so," Comrade Pavlovich says, speaking of this moment of the Congress, "one would have to assume that in moving the point about unanimity in cases of co-optation, we were concerned for the interests of our adversaries; for to the side which predominates in any institution unanimity is unnecessary and even disadvantageous." (*Letter on the Second Congress,* p. 14.) But today the chronological aspect of the events is all too often forgotten; it is forgotten that there was *a whole period at the Congress* when the present minority was the majority (thanks to the participation of the Liebers and Akimovs), and that it was precisely at this period that the controversy over co-optation to the central bodies took place, the underlying reason for which was the difference within the *Iskra* organisation over the personal composition of the central bodies. Whoever grasps this fact will understand the passion that marked our debates and will not be surprised by the *seeming* paradox that petty differences over details gave rise to really important issues of principle.

Comrade Deutsch, speaking at this same sitting (p. 277), was in many respects right when he said: "This motion is undoubtedly designed for the given moment." Yes, indeed, it is only when we have understood the *given moment*, in all its complexity, that we can understand the true meaning of the controversy. And it is highly important to bear in mind that when *we* were in the minority, we defended the rights of the minority by *such methods* as will be acknowledged legitimate and permissible by any European Social-Democrat, namely, by appealing to the Congress for stricter control over the personal composition of the central bodies. Similarly, Comrade Egorov was in many respects right when he said at the Congress, but at a different sitting: "I am exceedingly surprised to hear reference to principles again being made in the debate. [This was said in reference to the elections to the Central Committee, at the 31st sitting of the Congress, that is, if I am not mistaken, on Thursday morning, whereas the 26th sitting, of which we are now speaking, was held on Monday evening.] I think it is clear to everyone that during the last few days the debate has not revolved around any question of principle, but exclusively around securing or

preventing the inclusion of one or another person in the central institutions. Let us acknowledge that principles have been lost at this Congress long since, and call a spade a spade. (*General laughter. Muravyov:* 'I request to have it recorded in the minutes that Comrade Martov smiled')" (p. 337). It is not surprising that Comrade Martov, like the rest of us, laughed at Comrade Egorov's complaints, which were indeed ludicrous. Yes, "*during the last few days*" a very great deal did *revolve* around the personal composition of the central bodies. That is true. That was indeed *clear to everyone* at the Congress (and it is only *now* that the minority is trying to *obscure* this clear fact). And it is true, lastly, that a spade should be called a spade. But, for God's sake, where is the "loss of principles" *here*? After all, we assembled at the Congress *in order, in the first days* (see p. 10, the Congress agenda), to discuss the programme, tactics, and Rules and to decide the questions relating to them, and *in the last days* (Items 18 and 19 of the agenda) to discuss the personal composition of the central bodies and to decide *those* questions. When the *last days* of congresses are devoted to a struggle over the conductor's baton, that is natural and absolutely legitimate. (But when a fight over the conductor's baton is waged *after congresses,* that is squabbling.) If someone suffers defeat *at the congress* over the personal composition of the central bodies (as Comrade Egorov did), it is *simply ludicrous* of him, *after that,* to speak of "loss of principles". It is therefore understandable why everybody laughed at Comrade Egorov. And it is also understandable why Comrade Muravyov requested to have it recorded in the minutes that Comrade Martov shared in the laughter: *in laughing at Comrade Egorov, Comrade Martov was laughing at himself....*

In addition to Comrade Muravyov's irony, it will not be superfluous, perhaps, to mention the following fact. As we know, *after the Congress* Comrade Martov asserted right and left that it was the question of co-optation to the central bodies that played the cardinal role in our divergence, and that "the majority of the old editorial board" was emphatically opposed to mutual control over co-optation to the central bodies. *Before the Congress,* when accepting my plan to elect two trios, with mutual co-optation by a two-thirds majority, Comrade Martov *wrote to me on the*

subject: "In adopting this form of mutual co-optation, it should be stressed that after the Congress additions to each body will be effected on somewhat different lines. (*I would advise the following:* each body co-opts new members, informing the other body of its intention; *the latter may enter a protest, in which case the dispute shall be settled by the Council.* To avoid delays, this procedure should be followed in relation to *candidates nominated in advance—at least in the case of the Central Committee—* from whose number the additions may then be made more expeditiously.) In order to stress that subsequent co-optation will be effected in the manner provided by the Party Rules, the following words should be added to Item 22*: '. . . by which the decisions taken must be endorsed'." (My italics.)

Comment is superfluous.

Having explained the significance of the moment when the controversy over co-optation to the central bodies took place, we must dwell a little on the *votings* on the subject—it is unnecessary to dwell on the *discussion,* as the speeches of Comrade Martov and myself, already quoted, were followed only by brief interchanges in which very few of the delegates took part (see Minutes, pp. 277-80). In relation to the voting, Comrade Martov asserted at the League Congress that in my account of the matter I was guilty of "the greatest distortion" (League Minutes, p. 60) "in representing the struggle around the Rules [Comrade Martov unwittingly uttered a profound truth: after Paragraph 1, the heated disputes were indeed *around* the Rules] as a struggle of *Iskra* against the Martovites joined in coalition with the Bund".

Let us examine this interesting "greatest distortion". Comrade Martov added together the votings on the com-

* The reference is to my original draft of the *Tagesordnung* (agenda—*Ed.*) of the Congress and my commentary to it, with which all the delegates were familiar. Item 22 of this draft provided for the election of two trios—to the Central Organ and to the Central Committee—"mutual co-optation" by these six by a two-thirds majority, the endorsement of this mutual co-optation by the Congress, and subsequent co-optation by the Central Organ and the Central Committee separately.

position of the Council and the votings on co-optation and listed *eight* in all: 1) election to the Council of two members each from the Central Organ and the Central Committee—27 for (M), 16 against (L), 7 abstentions.* (Let me say parenthetically that the number of abstentions is shown in the Minutes—p. 270—as 8, but that is a detail.) 2) election of the fifth Council member by the Congress—23 for (L), 18 against (M), 7 abstentions. 3)replacement of lapsed Council members by the Council itself—23 against (M), 16 for (L), 12 abstentions. 4) unanimity for co-optation to the Central Committee—25 for (L), 19 against (M), 7 abstentions. 5) the stipulation for *one* reasoned protest for non-co-optation—21 for (L), 19 against (M), 11 abstentions. 6) unanimity for co-optation to the Central Organ—23 for (L), 21 against (M), 7 abstentions. 7) votability of a motion giving the Council the right to annul a Central Organ or Central Committee decision not to co-opt a new member—25 for (M), 19 against (L), 7 abstentions. 8) this motion itself—24 for (M), 23 against (L), 4 abstentions. "*Here, evidently,*" Comrade Martov concluded (League Minutes, p. 61), "*one Bund delegate voted for the motion while the rest abstained.*" (My italics.)

Why, may one ask, did Comrade Martov consider it *evident* that the Bundist had voted *for him, Martov,* when there were no roll-call votes?

Because he counted the *number of votes cast,* and when it indicated that the Bund *had taken part* in the voting, he, Comrade Martov, did not doubt that it had been on *his,* Martov's, side.

Where, then is the "greatest distortion" on my part?

The total votes were 51, without the Bundists 46, without the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists 43. In *seven* of the eight votings mentioned by Comrade Martov, 43, 41, 39, 44, 40, 44, and 44 delegates took part; in *one,* 47 delegates (or rather votes), and here Comrade Martov himself admitted that he was supported by a Bundist. We thus find that the picture sketched by Martov (and sketched incompletely, as we shall soon see) *only confirms and strengthens my account of the struggle*! We find that in a great many

---

* The letters M and L in parentheses indicate which side I (L) and which side Martov (M) was on.

cases the number of abstentions was *very high:* this points to the slight—*relatively slight*—interest shown by the Congress as a whole in certain *minor points,* and to the absence of any definite grouping of the *Iskra*-ists on these questions. Martov's statement that the Bundists "manifestly helped Lenin by abstaining" (League Minutes, p. 62) *in fact speaks against Martov*: it means that it was *only* when the Bundists were absent or abstained that I could sometimes count upon victory. But whenever the Bundists *thought it worth while* to intervene in the struggle, they supported Comrade Martov; and the above-mentioned case when 47 delegates voted was *not the only time* they intervened. Whoever cares to refer to the Congress Minutes will notice *a very strange incompleteness* in Comrade Martov's picture. Comrade Martov *simply omitted three cases* when the Bund *did take part* in the voting, and *it goes without saying* that *in all these cases* Comrade Martov was the victor. Here are the three cases: 1) adoption of Comrade Fomin's amendment to lower the required majority from four-fifths to two-thirds—27 for, 21 against (p. 278), that is, 48 votes. 2) adoption of Comrade Martov's motion to delete mutual co-optation—26 for, 24 against (p. 279), that is, 50 votes. Lastly, 3) rejection of my motion to permit co-optation to the Central Organ or the Central Committee only with the consent of all members of the Council (p. 280)—27 against, 22 for (there was even a roll-call vote, of which, unfortunately, there is no record in the minutes), that is, 49 votes.

To sum up: on the question of co-optation to the central bodies the Bundists took part *in only four votings* (the *three* I have just mentioned, with 48, 50, and 49 votes, and the *one* mentioned by Comrade Martov, with 47 votes). *In all these votings* Comrade Martov was the victor. *My statement of the case proves to be right in every particular*: in declaring that there was a coalition with the Bund, in noting the relatively minor character of the questions (a large number of abstentions in very many cases), and in pointing to the absence of any definite grouping of the *Iskra*-ists (no roll-call votes; very few speakers in the debates).

Comrade Martov's attempt to detect a contradiction in my statement of the case turns out to have been made with unsound means, for he tore isolated words from their con-

text and did not trouble to reconstruct the complete picture.

The last paragraph of the Rules, dealing with the organisation abroad, again gave rise to debates and votings which were highly significant from the point of view of the groupings at the Congress. The question at issue was recognition of the League as the Party organisation abroad. Comrade Akimov, of course, at once rose up in arms, reminding the Congress of the Union Abroad, which had been endorsed by the First Congress, and pointing out that the question was one of principle. "Let me first make the reservation," he said, "that I do not attach any particular practical significance to which way the question is decided. The ideological struggle which has been going on in our Party is undoubtedly not over yet; but it will be continued on a different plane and with a different alignment of forces.... Paragraph 13 of the Rules once more reflects, and in a very marked way, the tendency to convert our Congress from a Party congress into a factional congress. Instead of causing all Social-Democrats in Russia to defer to the decisions of the Party Congress in the name of Party unity, by uniting all Party organisations, it is proposed that the Congress should destroy the organisation of the minority and make the minority disappear from the scene" (p. 281). As the reader sees, the "continuity" which became so dear to Comrade Martov after his defeat over the composition of the central bodies was no less dear to Comrade Akimov. But at the Congress these people who apply different standards to themselves and to others rose up in heated protest against Comrade Akimov. Although the programme had been adopted, *Iskra* endorsed, and nearly the entire Rules passed, that "principle" which "in principle" distinguished the League from the Union was brought to the fore. "If Comrade Akimov is anxious to make the issue one of principle," exclaimed Comrade Martov, "we have nothing against it; especially since Comrade Akimov has spoken of possible combinations in a struggle with two trends. *The victory of one trend must be sanctioned* [this, mark, was said at the *27th* sitting of the Congress!] not in the sense that we make another bow to

Iskra, but in the sense that we *bow a last farewell to all the possible combinations Comrade Akimov spoke of*" (p. 282; my italics).

What a picture! When all the Congress arguments regarding the programme *were already over*, Comrade Martov continued to *bow a last farewell* to all possible combinations . . . until he suffered defeat over the composition of the central bodies! Comrade Martov "bowed a last farewell" at the Congress to that *possible* "combination" which he cheerfully brought to fruition *on the very morrow of the Congress*. But Comrade Akimov proved *even then* to be much more far-sighted than Comrade Martov; Comrade Akimov referred to the five years' work of "an old Party organisation which, by the will of the First Congress, bears the name of a committee", and concluded with a most venomous and *prescient* stab: "As to Comrade Martov's opinion that my hopes of a new trend appearing in our Party are in vain, let me say that *even he himself inspires me with such hopes*" (p. 283, my italics).

Yes, it must be confessed, Comrade Martov has fully justified Comrade Akimov's hopes!

Comrade Martov became convinced that Comrade Akimov was right, and joined him, after the "continuity" had been broken of an old Party body deemed to have been working for three years. Comrade Akimov's victory did not cost him much effort.

But at the Congress Comrade Akimov was backed—and backed consistently—only by Comrades Martynov and Brouckère and the Bundists (eight votes). Comrade Egorov, like the real leader of the "Centre" that he is, adhered to the golden mean: he agreed with the *Iskra*-ists, you see, he "sympathised" with them (p. 282), and *proved* his sympathy by the *proposal* (p. 283) to avoid the question of principle altogether and *say nothing* about either the League or the Union. The proposal was rejected by twenty-seven votes to fifteen. Apparently, in addition to the anti-*Iskra*-ists (eight), nearly the entire "Centre" (ten) voted with Comrade Egorov (the total vote was forty-two, so that a large number abstained or *were absent*, as often happened during votes which were uninteresting or whose result was a *foregone conclusion*). *Whenever the question arose* of carrying out the "*Iskra*"

principles in practice, it turned out that the "sympathy" of the "Centre" was purely *verbal*, and we secured only thirty votes or a little over. This was to be seen even more graphically in the debate and votes on Rusov's motion (to recognise the League as the *sole* organisation abroad). Here the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Marsh" took up an outright position of *principle*, and its champions, Comrades Lieber and Egorov, declared Comrade Rusov's motion unvotable, impermissible: "It slaughters all the other organisations abroad" (Egorov). And, not desiring to have any part in "slaughtering organisations", the speaker not only refused to vote, but even left the hall. But the leader of the "Centre" must be given his due: he displayed ten times more political manhood and strength of conviction (in his mistaken principles) than did Comrade Martov and Co., for he stood up for an organisation that was being "slaughtered" *not only when that organisation was his own circle* defeated in open combat.

Comrade Rusov's motion was deemed votable by twenty-seven votes to fifteen, and was then adopted by twenty-five votes to seventeen. If we add to these seventeen the absent Comrade Egorov, we get *the full complement (eighteen) of the anti-"Iskra"-ists and the "Centre"*.

As a whole Paragraph 13 of the Rules, dealing with the organisation abroad, was adopted by only *thirty-one votes* to twelve, with six abstentions. This figure, thirty-one—showing the approximate number of *Iskra*-ists at the Congress, that is, of people who consistently advocated *Iskra*'s views and applied them *in practice*—we are now encountering for no less than the *sixth time* in our analysis of the voting at the Congress (place of the Bund question on the agenda, the Organising Committee incident, the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group, and two votes on the agrarian programme). Yet Comrade Martov seriously wants to assure us that there are no grounds for picking out such a "narrow" group of *Iskra*-ists!

Nor can we omit to mention that the adoption of Paragraph 13 of the Rules evoked an extremely characteristic discussion in connection with a statement by Comrades Akimov and Martynov that they "refused to take part in the voting" (p. 288). The Bureau of the Congress discussed this statement and found—with every reason—that not even the direct closing down of the Union would entitle

its delegates to refuse to take part in the Congress proceedings. Refusal to vote is absolutely abnormal and impermissible—such was the view of the Bureau, which was shared by the whole Congress, including the *Iskra*-ists of the minority, who at the 28th sitting *hotly condemned what they themselves were guilty of at the 31st*! When Comrade Martynov proceeded to defend his statement (p. 291), he was opposed alike by Pavlovich, by Trotsky, by Karsky, and by Martov. Comrade Martov was particularly clear on the duties of a dissatisfied minority (until he found himself in the minority!) and held forth on the subject in a very didactic manner. "Either you are delegates to the Congress," he told Comrades Akimov and Martynov, "in which case you *must* take part in *all* its proceedings [my italics; Comrade Martov did not yet perceive any formalism and bureaucracy in subordination of the minority to the majority!]; or you are not delegates, in which case you cannot remain at the sitting.... The statement of the Union delegates compels me to ask two questions: are they members of the Party, and are they delegates to the Congress?" (P. 292).

Comrade Martov instructing Comrade Akimov in the duties of a Party member! But it was not without reason that Comrade Akimov had said that he had some hopes in Comrade Martov.... These hopes were to come true, however, only *after* Martov was defeated in the elections. When the matter did not concern himself, but others, Comrade Martov was deaf even to the terrible catchword "emergency law", *first launched* (if I am not mistaken) by *Comrade Martynov*. "The explanation given us", Comrade Martynov replied to those who urged him to withdraw his statement, "has not made it clear whether the decision was one of principle or an *emergency measure* against the Union. If the latter, we consider that the Union has been insulted. Comrade Egorov got the same impression as we did, namely, that it was an *emergency law* [my italics] against the Union, and therefore even left the hall" (p. 295). Both Comrade Martov and Comrade Trotsky protested vigorously, along with Plekhanov, against the absurd, *truly absurd,* idea of regarding a vote of the Congress as an *insult;* and Comrade Trotsky, defending a resolution adopted by the Congress on his motion (that Comrades Akimov and Martynov could consider

that full satisfaction had been given them), declared that "the resolution is one of principle, not a philistine one, and *it is no business of ours if anybody takes offence at it*" (p. 296). But it very soon became apparent that the circle mentality and the philistine outlook are still all too strong in our Party, and the proud words I have italicised proved to be merely a high-sounding phrase.

Comrades Akimov and Martynov refused to withdraw their statement, and walked out of the Congress, amidst the delegates' general cry: "Absolutely unwarranted!"

m) The Elections. End of the Congress

After adopting the Rules, the Congress passed a resolution on district organisations and a number of resolutions on particular Party organisations, and, following the extremely instructive debate on the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group which I have analysed above, proceeded to discuss the election of the Party's central institutions.

We already know that the *Iskra* organisation, from which the entire Congress had expected an authoritative recommendation, had split over this question, for the *minority* of the organisation wanted to test in free and open combat whether it could not win a *majority* at the Congress. We also know that a plan was known long before the Congress—and to all the delegates at the Congress itself—for *reconstituting* the editorial board by the election of two trios, one to the Central Organ and one to the Central Committee. Let us dwell on this plan in greater detail in order to throw light on the Congress debate.

Here is the exact text of my commentary to the draft *Tagesordnung* of the Congress where this plan was set forth:* "The Congress shall elect three persons to the editorial board of the Central Organ and three to the Central Committee. These six persons *in conjunction* shall, if necessary, co-opt by a two-thirds majority vote additional members to the editorial board of the Central Organ and to the Central Committee and report to this effect to the Congress. After the report has been endorsed by the Congress, subsequent co-optation shall be effected by the

* See my *Letter to the Editors of "Iskra"*, p. 5, and the League Minutes, p. 53.

editorial board of the Central Organ and by the Central Committee separately."

The plan stands out in this text quite definitely and unambiguously: it implies a *reconstitution* of the editorial board, effected *with the participation* of the most influential leaders of the practical work. Both the features of this plan which I have emphasised are apparent at once to anyone who takes the trouble to read the text at all attentively. But nowadays one has to stop and explain the most elementary things. It was precisely a *reconstitution* of the editorial board that the plan implied—not necessarily an enlargement and not necessarily a reduction of its membership, but its reconstitution; for the question of a possible enlargement or reduction was left *open:* co-optation was provided for only *if necessary.* Among the suggestions for such reconstitution made by various people, some provided for a possible reduction of the number of editors, and some for increasing it to seven (I personally had always regarded seven as far preferable to six), and even to eleven (I considered this possible in the event of peaceful union with all Social-Democratic organisations in general and with the Bund and the Polish Social-Democrats in particular). But what is most important, and this is usually overlooked by people talking about the "trio", is that *the matter of further co-optation to the Central Organ was to be decided with the participation of the members of the Central Committee.* Not one comrade of all the "minority" members of the organisation or Congress delegates, who knew of this plan and approved it (either explicitly or tacitly), has taken the trouble to explain the meaning of this point. Firstly, why was a trio, and only a trio, taken as the starting-point for reconstituting the editorial board? Obviously, this would have been *absolutely senseless* if the *sole*, or at least the main, purpose had been to *enlarge* the board, and if that board had really been considered a "harmonious" one. If the purpose is to enlarge a "harmonious" body, it would be strange to *start,* not with the whole body, but with only *a part.* Obviously, *not all* members of the board were considered quite suitable for discussing and *deciding* the matter of reconstituting it, of converting the old editorial circle into a *Party institution.* Obviously, even those who personally desired the reconstitution to be an enlargement recognised

that the old composition of the board was not harmonious and did not answer to the ideal of a Party institution, for otherwise there would be no reason *first* to reduce the six to *three* in order to enlarge it. I repeat, this is self-evident, and only the temporary confusion of the issue by "personalities" could have caused it to be forgotten.

Secondly, it will be seen from the above-quoted text that even *the agreement of all three members of the Central Organ* would not by itself be enough for the enlargement of the trio. This, too, is always lost sight of. Two-thirds of *six,* that is, *four* votes, were to be required for co-optation; hence it would only be necessary for the three members elected to the Central Committee to exercise their veto, and *no enlargement of the trio would be possible.* Conversely, even if two of the three members of the editorial board of the Central Organ were opposed to further co-optation, it would nevertheless be possible if all three members of the Central Committee were in favour of it. It is thus obvious that the intention was, in converting the old circle into a Party institution, to grant the *deciding* voice to the Congress-elected leaders of the practical work. Which comrades we roughly had in mind may be seen from the fact that prior to the Congress the editorial board unanimously elected Comrade Pavlovich a seventh member of their body, in case it should be necessary to make a statement at the Congress on behalf of the board; in addition to Comrade Pavlovich, a certain old member of the *Iskra* organisation and member of the Organising Committee, *who was subsequently elected to the Central Committee,* was proposed for the seventh place.

Thus the plan for the election of two trios was obviously designed: 1) to reconstitute the editorial board; 2) to rid it of certain elements of the old circle spirit, which is out of place in a Party institution (if there had been nothing to get rid of there would have been no point in the idea of an initial trio!); and, lastly, 3) to get rid of the "theocratic" features of a body of writers (getting rid of them by enlisting the services of prominent practical workers *in deciding* the question of enlarging the trio). This plan, with which all the editors were acquainted, was, clearly, based on *three years' experience* of work and *fully* accorded with the principles of revolutionary organisation that we were consistently introducing. In the period of *disunity*

in which *Iskra* entered the arena, groups were often formed haphazardly and spontaneously, and inevitably suffered from certain pernicious manifestations of the circle spirit. The creation of a Party presupposed and demanded the elimination of these features; the participation of prominent practical workers in this elimination was *essential,* for certain members of the editorial board had *always* dealt with organisational affairs, and the body to enter the system of Party institutions was to be a body not merely of writers, but of political leaders. It was likewise natural, from the standpoint of the policy *Iskra* had always pursued, to leave the selection of the initial trio to the Congress: we had observed the greatest *caution* in preparing for the Congress, waiting until all controversial questions of principle relating to programme, tactics, and organisation had been *fully* clarified; we had *no doubt* that the Congress would be *an "Iskra"-ist one* in the sense that its overwhelming majority would be solid on these fundamental questions (this was also indicated in part by the resolutions recognising *Iskra* as the leading organ); we *were bound* therefore to leave it to the comrades who had borne the whole brunt of the work of disseminating *Iskra*'s ideas and preparing for its conversion into a party to decide *for themselves* who were the most suitable candidates for the new Party institution. It is *only* by the fact that this plan for "two trios" was a natural one, *only* by the fact that it *fully accorded* with *Iskra*'s whole policy and with everything known about *Iskra* to people at all closely acquainted with the work, that the general approval of this plan and the absence of any rival plan *is to be explained.*

And so, at the Congress, Comrade Rusov first of all moved the election of *two trios. It never even occurred* to the followers of Martov, who *had informed us in writing that this plan was connected with the false accusation of opportunism,* to reduce the dispute over a board of six or three to the question whether this accusation was right or wrong. *Not one of them even hinted at it! None of them ventured to say a single word* about the differing shades of principle involved in the dispute over six or three. They preferred a commoner and cheaper method, namely, to evoke *pity,* to speak of *possible injured feelings,* to pretend that *the question of the editorial board had already*

been settled by appointing *Iskra* the Central Organ. This last argument, adduced by Comrade Koltsov against Comrade Rusov, was a piece of *downright falsity*. Two separate items were included—not fortuitously, of course—in the Congress agenda (see Minutes, p. 10): Item 4—"Central Organ of the Party", and Item 18—"Election of the Central Committee and the editorial board of the Central Organ". That in the first place. In the second place, when the Central Organ was being appointed, *all* the delegates categorically declared that this did *not* mean the endorsement of the editorial board, but only of the trend,* and *not a single protest* was raised against these declarations.

Thus the statement that by endorsing a definite organ the Congress had in effect endorsed the editorial board—a statement many times reiterated by the adherents of the minority (by Koltsov, p. 321, by Posadovsky, p. 321, by Popov, p. 322, and by many others)—was *simply untrue in fact*. It was a perfectly obvious *manoeuvre* to cover a *retreat* from the position held at the time when the question of the composition of the central bodies could still be regarded *in a really dispassionate light by all*. The retreat could not be justified either by motives of principle (for to raise the question of the "false accusation of opportunism" *at the Congress* was too much to the *disadvantage* of the minority, and they *did not even hint* at it), or by a reference to the *factual* data showing which was actually more effectual—six or three (for the mere mention of these facts would have produced a heap of arguments

---

* See Minutes, p. 140, *Akimov*'s speech: "... I am told that we shall discuss the election of the Central Organ at the end"; *Muravyov's* speech against Akimov, "who takes the question of the future editorial board of the Central Organ very much to heart" (p. 141); *Pavlovich*'s speech to the effect that, having appointed the organ, we had obtained "the concrete material on which to perform the operations Comrade Akimov is so much concerned about", and that there could not be a shadow of doubt about *Iskra's* submitting" to "the decisions of the Party" (p. 142); *Trotsky*'s speech: "Since we are not endorsing the editorial board, what is it that we are endorsing in *Iskra*?... Not the name, but the trend ... not the name, but the banner" (p. 142); *Martynov*'s speech: "... Like many other comrades, I consider that while discussing the adoption of *Iskra*, as a newspaper of a definite trend, as our Central Organ, we should not at this juncture discuss the method of electing or endorsing its editorial board; we shall discuss that later in its proper order on the agenda..." (p. 143).

against the minority). They had to try to burke the issue by *talk* about a "symmetrical whole", about a "harmonious team", about a "symmetrical and crystal-integral entity", and so on. It is not surprising that these arguments were immediately called by their true name: "*wretched words*" (p. 328). The very plan for a trio clearly testified to a lack of "harmony", and the impressions obtained by the delegates during a month and more of working together obviously afforded a mass of material to enable them to judge *for themselves*. When Comrade Posadovsky hinted at this material (incautiously and injudiciously from his own standpoint: see pp. 321 and 325 regarding the "qualified sense" in which he had used the word "dissonances"), Comrade Muravyov bluntly declared: "In my opinion it is now quite clear to the majority of the Congress that such* dissonances undoubtedly do exist" (p. 321). The minority chose to construe the word "dissonances" (which was given currency by Posadovsky, not Muravyov) in a purely personal sense, not daring to take up the gauntlet flung down by Comrade Muravyov, not daring to bring forward in defence of the board of six a *single* argument *on the actual merits of the case*. The result was a dispute which for its sterility was more than comic: the majority (through the mouth of Comrade Muravyov) declared that the true significance of the six-or-three issue was *quite clear* to them, but the minority persistently refused to listen and affirmed that "we are *not in a position* to examine it". The majority not only considered themselves in a position to examine it, but had "examined it" already and announced that the results of the examination were *quite clear* to them, but the minority apparently *feared an examination* and took cover behind mere "wretched words". The majority urged us to "bear in mind that our Central Organ is something more than a literary group"; the majority "wanted the Central

---

* What "dissonances" exactly Comrade Posadovsky had in mind the Congress never did learn. Comrade Muravyov, for his part, stated at this same sitting (p. 322) that his meaning had been misrepresented, and when the minutes were being endorsed he plainly declared that he "was referring to the dissonances which had been revealed in the Congress debates on various points, dissonances over principle, whose existence is now unfortunately a fact that nobody will deny" (p. 353).

Organ to be headed by *quite definite persons, persons known to the Congress, persons meeting the requirements* I have mentioned" (that is, not only literary requirements; Comrade Lange's speech, p. 327). Again the minority did not dare to take up the gauntlet and did not say a word as to who, in their opinion, was suitable for what was more than a literary body, as to who was a figure of a "quite definite" magnitude "known to the Congress". The minority continued to take shelter behind their celebrated "harmony". Nor was this all. The minority even introduced into the debate arguments which were absolutely false in principle and which therefore quite rightly evoked a sharp rebuff. "The Congress," don't you see, "has neither the moral nor the political right to refashion the editorial board" (Trotsky, p. 326); "it is too delicate [*sic*!] a question" (Trotsky again); "*how will the editors who are not reelected feel about the fact that the Congress does not want to see them on the board any more?*" (Tsaryov, p. 324.)*

Such arguments simply put the whole question on the plane of *pity and injured feelings,* and were a direct admission of bankruptcy as regards real arguments of principle, real political arguments. And the majority immediately gave this attitude its *true* name: *philistinism* (Comrade Rusov). "We are hearing strange speeches from the lips of revolutionaries," Comrade Rusov justly remarked, "speeches that are in marked disharmony with the concepts Party work, Party ethics. The principal argument on which the opponents of electing trios take their stand amounts to a *purely philistine view of Party affairs* [my italics throughout]. . . . If we adopt this standpoint, which is a *philistine* and not a Party standpoint, we shall at every election have to consider: will not Petrov be offended if Ivanov is elected and not he, will not some member of the Organising Committee be offended if another member, and not he, is elected to the Central Committee? Where is this going to land us, comrades? If we have gathered here for the purpose of creating a Party, and *not*

---

* Cf. Comrade Posadovsky's speech: ". . . By electing three of the six members of the old editorial board, you pronounce the other three to be unnecessary and superfluous. And you have neither any right nor any grounds to do that."

of indulging in mutual compliments and philistine sentimentality, then we can never agree to such a view. We are about to *elect officials*, and there can be no talk of lack of confidence in any person not elected; *our only consideration should be the interests of the work and a person's suitability for the post to which he is being elected*" (p.325).

We would advise all who want to make an independent examination of the reasons for the Party split and to dig down to the *roots* of it at the Congress to read this speech of Comrade Rusov's *over and over again;* his arguments were not even contested by the minority, let alone refuted.

And indeed there is no contesting such elementary, rudimentary truths, which were forgotten only because of "*nervous excitement*", as Comrade Rusov himself rightly explained. And this is really the explanation least discreditable to the minority of how they could desert the Party standpoint for a philistine and circle standpoint.*

---

* In his *State of Siege*, Comrade Martov treats this question just as he does all the others he touches upon. He does not trouble to give a complete picture of the controversy. He very modestly evades the only real issue of *principle* that arose in this controversy: philistine sentimentality, or the election of officials; the Party standpoint, or the injured feelings of the Ivan Ivanoviches? Here, too, Comrade Martov confines himself to plucking out isolated bits and pieces of what happened and adding all sorts of abusive remarks at my expense. That's not quite enough, Comrade Martov!

Comrade Martov particularly pesters *me* with the question *why* Comrades Axelrod, Zasulich, and Starover were not elected at the Congress. The philistine attitude he has adopted prevents him from seeing how *unseemly* these questions are (why doesn't he ask his colleague on the editorial board, Comrade Plekhanov?). He detects a contradiction in the fact that I regard the behaviour of the minority at the Congress on the question of the six as "tactless", yet at the same time demand Party publicity. There is no contradiction here, as Martov himself could easily have seen if he had taken the trouble to give a connected account of the *whole* matter, and not merely fragments of it. It was tactless to treat the question from a philistine standpoint and appeal to pity and consideration for injured feelings; the interests of Party publicity demanded that an estimation be given *in point of fact* of the advantages of six as compared with three, an estimation of the candidates for the posts, an estimation of the different shades; *the minority gave not a hint of any of this at the Congress.*

By carefully studying the minutes, Comrade Martov would have found in the delegates' speeches a *whole series* of arguments against the board of six. Here is a selection from these speeches: firstly, that dissonances, in the sense of different shades of principle, were clearly

But the minority were so totally unable to find sensible and business-like arguments against election that, in addition to introducing philistinism into Party affairs, they resorted to downright *scandalous practices*. Indeed, what other name can we give to the action of Comrade Popov when he advised Comrade Muravyov "not to undertake delicate *commissions*" (p. 322)? What is this but "getting personal", as Comrade Sorokin rightly put it (p. 328)? What is it but speculating on "*personalities*", in the absence of *political* arguments? Was Comrade Sorokin right or wrong when he said that "we have always protested against such practices"? "*Was it permissible for Comrade Deutsch* to try demonstratively to pillory comrades who did not agree with him?* (P. 328.)

---

apparent in the old six; secondly, that a technical simplification of the editorial work was desirable; thirdly, that the interests of the work came before philistine sentimentality, and only election could ensure that the persons chosen were suited for their posts; fourthly, that the right of the Congress to choose must not be restricted; fifthly, that the Party now needed something more than a literary group on the Central Organ, that the Central Organ needed not only writers, but administrators as well; sixthly, that the Central Organ must consist of quite definite persons, persons known to the *Congress;* seventhly, that a board of six was often ineffectual, and the board's work had been accomplished *not thanks* to its abnormal constitution, *but in spite of it*; eighthly, that the conduct of a newspaper was a party (not a circle) affair, etc. Let Comrade Martov, if he is so interested in the reasons for the non-election of these persons, *penetrate* into the meaning of each of these considerations and refute *a single one* of them.

* That is the way Comrade Sorokin, *at this same sitting*, understood Comrade Deutsch's words (cf. p. 324—"sharp interchange with Orlov"). Comrade Deutsch explained (p. 351) that he had "said nothing like it", but *in the same breath* admitted that he had said something *very, very much* "like it". "I did not say 'who dares'," Comrade Deutsch explained; "what I said was: 'I would be interested to see the people who would dare [*sic*!—Comrade Deutsch fell out of the frying-pan into the fire!] to support such a criminal [*sic*!] proposal as the election of a board of three' " (p. 351). Comrade Deutsch did not refute, *but confirmed* Comrade Sorokin's words. Comrade Deutsch only confirmed the truth of Comrade Sorokin's reproach that "all concepts are here muddled" (in the minority's arguments in favour of six). Comrade Deutsch only confirmed the pertinence of Comrade Sorokin's reminder of the *elementary* truth that "we are Party members and should be guided exclusively by political considerations". To cry that election was *criminal* was to sink not only to philistinism, but to practices that were downright *scandalous*!

Let us sum up the debate on the editorial board. The minority did not refute (nor even try to refute) the majority's numerous statements that the plan for a trio was known to the *delegates* at the very beginning of the Congress *and prior to the Congress,* and that, consequently, this plan was based on *considerations and facts which had no relation to the events and disputes at the Congress.* In defending the board of six, the minority took up a position which was *wrong and impermissible in principle,* one based on *philistine* considerations. The minority displayed an utter forgetfulness of the *Party* attitude towards the election of *officials,* not even attempting to give an *estimation* of each candidate for a post and of his suitability or unsuitability for the functions it involved. The minority *evaded* a discussion of the question on its merits and talked instead of their celebrated harmony, "shedding tears" and "indulging in pathos" (Lange's speech, p. 327), as though "somebody was being murdered". In their state of "*nervous excitement*" (p. 325) the minority even went to the length of "*getting personal*", of howling that election was "criminal", and similar *impermissible* practices.

The battle over six or three at the 30th sitting of our Congress was a battle between *philistinism* and the *party spirit,* between "*personalities*" of the worst kind and *political considerations,* between *wretched words* and the most elementary conception of *revolutionary duty.*

And at the 31st sitting, when the Congress, by a majority of nineteen to seventeen with three abstentions, had *rejected* the motion to endorse the old editorial board as a whole (see p. 330 and the *errata*), and when the *former editors* had returned to the hall, Comrade Martov in his "statement on behalf of the majority of the former editorial board" (pp. 330-31) displayed this same shakiness and instability of political position and *political concepts* to an even greater degree. Let us examine in detail each point of this collective *statement* and my reply (pp. 332-33).

"From now on," Comrade Martov said when the old editorial board was not endorsed, "the old *Iskra* does not exist, and it would be more consistent to change its name. At any rate, we see in the new resolution of the Congress a substantial limitation of the vote of confidence in *Iskra* which was passed at one of the first Congress sittings."

Comrade Martov and his colleagues raised a truly inter-

esting and in many respects instructive question of *political consistency*. I have already replied to this by referring to what *everyone* said when *Iskra* was being endorsed (Minutes, p. 349, cf. above, p. 82)*. What we have here is unquestionably a crying instance of political inconsistency, but whether on the part of the majority of the Congress or of the majority of the old editorial board we shall leave the reader to judge. And there are two other questions very pertinently raised by Comrade Martov and his colleagues which we shall likewise leave the reader to decide: 1)Did the desire to detect a "limitation of the vote of confidence in *Iskra*" in the *Congress* decision to *elect officials to the editorial board of the Central Organ* betray a *philistine* or *a Party* attitude? 2) When *did the old "Iskra" really cease to exist*—starting from No. 46, when the two of us, Plekhanov and I, began to conduct it, or from No. 53, when the majority of the old editorial board took it over? If the first question is a most interesting *question of principle*, the second is a most interesting *question of fact*.

"Since it has now been decided," Comrade Martov continued, "to elect an editorial board of three, I must declare on my own behalf and that of the three other comrades that none of us will sit on this new editorial board. For myself, I must add that if it be true that certain comrades wanted to include my name in the list of candidates for this 'trio', I must regard it as an insult which I have done nothing to deserve [*sic*!]. I say this in view of the circumstances under which it has been decided to change the editorial board. This decision was taken on the grounds of some kind of 'friction',** of the former editorial board

---

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, pp. 507-08.—*Ed.*

** Comrade Martov was probably referring to Comrade Posadovsky's expression "dissonances". I repeat that Comrade Posadovsky never did explain to the Congress what *he* meant, while Comrade Muravyov, who had likewise used the expression, explained that he meant dissonances over *principle*, as *revealed in the Congress debates*. The reader will recall that the *sole* real debate over *principles* in which four of the editors (Plekhanov, Martov, Axelrod, and I) took part was in connection with Paragraph 1 of the Rules, and that Comrades Martov and Starover complained *in writing* of a "false accusation of opportunism" as being one of the arguments for "changing" the editorial board. *In this letter*, Comrade Martov had detected a *clear* connection between "opportunism" and the plan to change the editorial board, but *at the Congress* he confined himself

having been ineffectual; moreover, the Congress decided the matter along definite lines without questioning the editorial board about this friction or even appointing a commission to report whether it had been ineffectual. [Strange that it never occurred to any member of the minority to propose to the Congress to "question the editorial board" or appoint a commission! Was it not because it would have been useless after the split in the *Iskra* organisation and the failure of the negotiations Comrades Martov and Starover wrote about?] Under the circumstances, I must regard the assumption of certain comrades that I would agree to sit on an editorial board reformed in this manner as a slur on my political reputation. . . ."*

I have purposely quoted this argument in full to acquaint the reader with a specimen and with the beginning of what has blossomed out so profusely *since the Congress* and which cannot be called by any other name than *squabbling*. I have already employed this expression in my *Letter to the Editors of "Iskra"*, and in spite of the editors' annoyance I am obliged to repeat it, for its correctness is beyond dispute. It is a mistake to think that squabbling presupposes "sordid motives" (as the editors of the new *Iskra* conclude): any revolutionary at all acquainted with our colonies of exiles and political émigrés will have witnessed dozens of cases of squabbling in which

---

to hinting hazily at "*some kind of friction*". The "false accusation of opportunism" had already been forgotten!

* Comrade Martov further added: "Ryazanov might agree to such a role, but not the Martov whom, I think, you know by his work." Inasmuch as this was *a personal attack* on Ryazanov, Comrade Martov withdrew the remark. But it was not because of Ryazanov's personal qualities (to refer to them would have been out of place) that his name figured at the Congress as a byword; it was because of the *political complexion* of the Borba group—its *political mistakes*. Comrade Martov does well to withdraw real or assumed personal insults, but this should not lead us to forget *political mistakes*, which should serve as a *lesson to the Party*. The Borba group was accused at our Congress of causing "organisational chaos" and "disunity not justified by any considerations of principle" (Comrade Martov's speech, p. 38). *Such* political conduct does indeed deserve censure, and not only when seen in a small group prior to the Party Congress, during the period of *general* chaos, but also when we see it *after* the Party Congress, in the period when the chaos has been abolished, even if indulged in by "the majority of the *Iskra* editorial board and the majority of the Emancipation of Labour group."

the most absurd accusations, suspicions, self-accusations, "personalities", etc., were levelled and harped upon owing to "nervous excitement" and abnormal, stagnant conditions of life. No sensible person will necessarily seek for sordid *motives* in these squabbles, *however sordid their manifestations may be*. And it is only to "nervous excitement" that we can attribute that tangled skein of absurdities, personalities, fantastic horrors, and imaginary insults and slurs which is contained in the above-quoted passage from Comrade Martov's speech. Stagnant conditions of life breed such squabbles among us by the hundred, and a political party would be unworthy of respect if it did not have the courage to designate its malady by its true name, to make a ruthless diagnosis and search for a cure.

Insofar as anything relating to principles can be extracted at all from this tangled skein, one is led *inevitably* to the conclusion that "elections have nothing to do with any slurs on political reputations", that "to deny the right of the Congress to hold new elections, make new appointments of any kind, and change the composition of its authorised boards" is to *confuse* the issue, and that "Comrade Martov's views on the permissibility of electing part of the old board reflect an *extreme confusion of political ideas*" (as I expressed it at the Congress, p. 332).*

I shall omit Comrade Martov's "personal" remark as to who initiated the plan for the trio, and shall pass to his "political" characterisation of the significance attaching to the non-endorsement of the old editorial board: ". . .What has now taken place is the last act of the struggle which has raged during the second half of the Congress. [Quite right! And this second half of the Congress began when Martov fell into the tight clutches of Comrade Akimov over Paragraph 1 of the Rules.] It is an open secret that in this reform it is not a question of being 'effectual', but of a struggle for influence on the Central Committee. [Firstly, it is an open secret that it *was* a question of being effectual, *as well as* of a divergence over the *composition* of the Central Committee, for the plan of the "reform" was proposed at a time when that divergence *was*

---

* See "Speech at the Election of the Editorial Board of *Iskra*, August 7 (20)" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 505-06).—*Ed.*

nowhere in sight and when Comrade Martov joined us in electing Comrade Pavlovich a seventh member of the editorial board! Secondly, we have already shown by *documentary* proofs that it was a question of the *personal composition* of the Central Committee, that *à la fin des fins* the matter came down to a difference of lists: Glebov-Travinsky-Popov or Glebov-Trotsky-Popov.] The majority of the editorial board showed that they did not want the Central Committee to be converted into a tool of the editorial board. [That is Akimov's refrain: the question of the influence for which every majority fights at any and every party congress so as then to *consolidate* it with the help of a *majority* on the central institutions is transferred to the plane of *opportunist slanders* about a "tool" of the *editorial board,* about a "mere *appendage*" of the editorial board, as Comrade Martov himself put it somewhat later, p. 334.] That is why it was found necessary to reduce the number of members of the editorial board [!!]. And that is why I cannot join such an editorial board. [Just examine this "that is why" a little more carefully. How *might* the editorial board have converted the Central Committee into an appendage or tool? *Only* if it had had three votes on the Council and had *abused* its superiority. Is that not clear? And is it not likewise clear that, having been elected the third member, Comrade Martov could always have prevented such an abuse and *by his vote alone* have destroyed all superiority of the editorial board on the Council? Consequently, the whole matter boils down to the personal composition of the Central Committee, and it is at once clear that the talk about a tool and an appendage is *slander.*] Together with the majority of the old editorial board, I thought that the Congress would put an end to the 'state of siege' in the Party and would establish a normal state of affairs. But as a matter of fact the state of siege, with its emergency laws against particular groups, still continues, and has even become more acute. Only if the old editorial board remains in its entirety can we guarantee that the rights conferred on the editorial board by the Rules will not be usd to the detriment of the Party. . . ."

There you have the whole passage from Comrade Martov's speech in which *he first advanced the notorious war-cry of a "state of siege"*. And now look at my reply to him.

"...However, in correcting Martov's statement about the private character of the plan for two trios, I have no intention of denying Martov's assertion of the 'political significance' of the step we took in not endorsing the old editorial board. On the contrary, I fully and unreservedly agree with Comrade Martov that this step is of great political significance—only not the significance which Martov ascribes to it. He said that it was an act in a struggle for influence on the Central Committee in Russia. I go farther than Martov. The whole activity of *Iskra* as a separate group has hitherto been a struggle for influence; but now it is a matter of something more, namely, the organisational consolidation of this influence, and not only a struggle for it. How profoundly Comrade Martov and I differ politically on this point is shown by the fact that he blames me for this wish to influence the Central Committee, whereas I count it to my credit that I strove and still strive to consolidate this influence by organisational means. It appears that we are even talking in different languages! What would be the point of all our work, of all our efforts, if they ended in the same old struggle for influence, and not in its complete acquisition and consolidation? Yes, Comrade Martov is absolutely right: the step we have taken is undoubtedly a major political step showing that one of the trends now to be observed has been chosen for the future work of our Party. *And I am not at all frightened by the dreadful words 'a state of siege in the Party', 'emergency laws against particular individuals and groups', etc.* We not only can but we must create a 'state of siege' in relation to unstable and vacillating elements and all our Party Rules, the whole system of centralism now endorsed by the Congress are nothing but a 'state of siege' in respect to the numerous sources of political vagueness. It is special laws, even if they are emergency laws, that are needed as measures against vagueness, and the step taken by the Congress has correctly indicated the political direction to be followed, by having created a firm basis for such laws and such measures."*

I have italicised in this summary of my speech at the Congress *the sentence which Comrade Martov preferred to omit in his "State of Siege"* (p. 16). It is not surprising that he did not like this sentence and did not choose to understand its obvious meaning.

What does the expression "dreadful words" imply, Comrade Martov?

It implies *mockery*, mockery of those who give big names to little things, who confuse a simple question by pretentious phrase-mongering.

The little and simple fact which *alone* could have given, and actually did give, Comrade Martov cause for "nervous excitement" was *nothing but* his *defeat at the Con-*

---

* See "Speech at the Election of the Editorial Board of *Iskra*, August 7 (20)" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 507-08).—*Ed.*

gress over the *personal composition of the central bodies.* The political significance of this simple fact was that, having won, the majority of the Party Congress consolidated their influence by establishing their majority in the Party leadership as well, by creating an organisational basis for a struggle, with the help of the Rules, against what this majority considered to be vacillation, instability, and vagueness.* To make this an occasion for talking of a "struggle for influence" with horror in one's eyes and complaining of a "state of siege" was nothing but *pretentious phrase-mongering,* dreadful words.

Comrade Martov does not agree with this? Then perhaps he will try to prove to us that a party congress has ever existed, or is in general conceivable, where the majority would not proceed to consolidate the influence they had gained: 1) by securing a majority on the central bodies, and 2) by endowing it with powers to counteract vacillation, instability, and vagueness.

Before the elections, our Congress had to decide whether to give *one-third* of the votes on the Central Organ and on the Central Committee to the Party majority or the Party minority. The board of six and Comrade Martov's list meant giving one-third to us and two-thirds to his followers. A trio on the Central Organ and our list meant two-thirds for us and one-third for Comrade Martov's followers. Comrade Martov refused to make terms with us or yield, and challenged us *in writing* to a battle at the Congress. Having suffered defeat at the Congress, he began to weep and to complain of a "state of siege"! Well, isn't that squabbling? Isn't it a new manifestation of the wishy-washiness of the intellectual?

One cannot help recalling in this connection the brilliant social and psychological characterisation of this latter quality recently given by Karl Kautsky. The Social-

---

* How was the instability, vacillation, and vagueness of the *Iskra*-ist minority manifested at the Congress? Firstly, by their opportunist phrase-mongering over Paragraph 1 of the Rules; secondly, by their coalition with Comrades Akimov and Lieber, which during the second half of the Congress rapidly grew more pronounced; thirdly, by their readiness to degrade the question of electing officials to the Central Organ to the level of philistinism, of wretched words, and even of getting personal. After the Congress all these lovely attributes developed from mere buds into blossoms and fruit.

Democratic parties of different countries suffer not infrequently nowadays from similar maladies, and it would be very, very useful for us to learn from more experienced comrades the correct diagnosis and the correct cure. Karl Kautsky's characterisation of certain intellectuals will therefore be only a seeming digression from our theme.

"The problem... that again interests us so keenly today is the *antagonism between the intelligentsia* and the proletariat.* My colleagues [Kautsky is himself an intellectual, a writer and editor] will mostly be indignant that I admit this antagonism. But it actually exists, and, as in other cases, it would be the most inexpedient tactics to try to overcome the fact by denying it. This antagonism is a social one, it relates to classes, not to individuals. The individual intellectual, like the individual capitalist, may identify himself with the proletariat in its class struggle. When he does, he changes his character too. It is not *this type* of intellectual, who is still an exception among his class, that we shall mainly speak of in what follows. Unless otherwise stated, *I shall use the word intellectual to mean only the common run of intellectual who takes the stand of bourgeois society,* and who is characteristic of the intelligentsia as a *class.* This *class* stands in a certain *antagonism* to the proletariat.

"This antagonism differs, however, from the antagonism between labour and capital. The intellectual is not a capitalist. True, his standard of life is bourgeois and he must maintain it if he is not to become a pauper; but at the same time he is compelled to sell the product of his labour, and often his labour-power, and is himself often enough exploited and humiliated by the capitalist. Hence the intellectual does not stand in any economic antagonism to the proletariat. But his status of life and his conditions of labour are not proletarian, and this gives rise to a certain antagonism in sentiments and ideas.

"As an isolated individual, the proletarian is nothing. His whole strength, his whole progress, all his hopes and expectations are derived from *organisation,* from systematic action in conjunction with his fellows. He feels big and strong when he forms part of a big and strong organism. This organism is the main thing for him; the individual in comparison means very little. The proletarian fights with the utmost devotion as part of the anonymous mass, without prospect of personal advantage or personal glory, doing his duty in any post he is assigned to with a voluntary discipline which pervades all his feelings and thoughts.

"Quite different is the case of the intellectual. He does not fight by means of power, but by argument. His weapons are his personal knowledge, his personal ability, his personal convictions. He can attain to any position at all only through his personal qualities.

---

* I use the words intellectual and intelligentsia to translate the German *Literal* and *Literatentum,* which include not only writers but in general all educated people, the members of the liberal professions, the brain workers, as the English call them, as distinct from manual workers.

Hence the freest play for his individuality seems to him the prime condition for successful activity. It is only with difficulty that he submits to being a part subordinate to a whole, and then only from necessity, not from inclination. He recognises the need of discipline only for the mass, not for the elect minds. And of course he counts himself among the latter. . . .

"Nietzsche's philosophy, with its cult of the superman, for whom the fulfilment of his own individuality is everything and any subordination of that individuality to a great social aim is vulgar and despicable, is the real philosophy of the intellectual; and it renders him totally unfit to take part in the class struggle of the proletariat.

"Next to Nietzsche, the most outstanding exponent of a philosophy answering to the sentiments of the intelligentsia is probably Ibsen. His Doctor Stockmann (in *An Enemy of the People*) is not a socialist, as many have thought, but the type of the intellectual, who is bound to come into conflict with the proletarian movement, and with any movement of the people generally, as soon as he attempts to work within it. For the basis of the proletarian movement, as of every democratic* movement, is respect for the majority of one's fellows. The typical intellectual *à la* Stockmann regards a 'compact majority' as a monster that must be overthrown. . . .

"An ideal example of an intellectual who had become thoroughly inbued with the sentiments of the proletariat, and who, although he was a brilliant writer, had quite lost the specific mentality of the intellectual, marched cheerfully with the rank and file, worked in any post he was assigned to, subordinated himself wholeheartedly to our great cause, and despised the feeble whining [*weichliches Gewinsel*] about the suppression of his individuality which the intellectual trained on Ibsen and Nietzsche is prone to indulge in when he happens to be in the minority—an ideal example of the kind of intellectual the socialist movement needs was Liebknecht. We may also mention Marx, who never forced himself to the forefront and whose party discipline in the International, where he often found himself in the minority, was exemplary."**

Just such feeble whining of intellectuals who happened to find themselves in the minority, and nothing more, was the refusal of Martov and his friends to be named for office merely because the old circle had not been endorsed, as were their complaints of a state of siege and emergency laws "against particular groups", which Martov cared nothing about when *Yuzhny Rabochy* and *Rabocheye*

---

* It is extremely characteristic of the confusion brought by our Martovites into all questions of organisation that, though they have swung towards Akimov and a *misplaced* democracy, they are at the same time *incensed at the democratic election of the editorial board*, its election at *the Congress*, as planned in advance by everybody! Perhaps that is your *principle*, gentlemen?

** Karl Kautsky. "Franz Mehring", *Neue Zeit*, XXII, I, S. 101-03, 1903, No. 4.

Dyelo were dissolved, but only came to care about when *his* group was dissolved.

Just such feeble whining of intellectuals who happened to find themselves in the minority was that endless torrent of complaints, reproaches, hints, accusations, slanders, and insinuations regarding the "compact majority" which was started by Martov and which poured out in such a flood at our Party Congress* (and even more so after).

The minority bitterly complained that the compact majority held private meetings. Well, the minority had to do something to conceal the unpleasant fact that the delegates it invited to its own private meetings refused to attend, while those who would willingly have attended (the Egorovs, Makhovs, an Brouckères) the minority could not invite after all the fighting it had done with them at the Congress.

The minority bitterly complained of the "false accusation of opportunism". Well, it had to do something to conceal the unpleasant fact that it was *opportunists,* who in most cases had followed the anti-*Iskra*-ists—and partly these anti-*Iskra*-ists themselves—that made up the compact minority, seizing with both hands on the championship of the circle spirit in Party institutions, opportunism in arguments, philistinism in Party affairs, and the instability and wishy-washiness of the intellectual.

We shall show in the next section what is the explanation of the highly interesting *political fact* that a "compact majority" was formed towards the end of the Congress, and why, in spite of every challenge, the minority so very, very warily *evades* the *reasons* for its formation and its *history*. But let us first finish our analysis of the Congress debates.

During the elections to the Central Committee, Comrade Martov moved a highly characteristic resolution (p. 336), the three main features of which I have on occasion referred to as "mate in three moves". Here they are: 1) to ballot *lists* of candidates for the Central Committee, and not the candidates individually; 2) after the lists had been announced, to allow two sittings to elapse (for discussion, evidently); 3) in the absence of an absolute ma-

---

* See pp. 337, 338, 340, 352, etc., of the Congress Minutes.

jority, a second ballot to be regarded as final. This resolution was a most carefully conceived stratagem (we must give the adversary his due!), with which Comrade Egorov did not agree (p. 337), but which would *most certainly* have assured a complete victory for Martov *if the seven Bundists and "Rabocheye Dyelo"-ists had not quit the Congress.* The reason for this stratagem was that the *Iskra*-ist minority *did not have, and could not have had,* a "direct agreement" (such as there was among the *Iskra*-ist majority) *even with the Egorovs and Makhovs,* let alone the Bund and Brouckère.

Remember that at the League Congress Comrade Martov complained that the "false accusation of opportunism" presumed a direct agreement between him and the Bund. I repeat, this only seemed so to Comrade Martov in his fright, and *this very refusal of Comrade Egorov to agree to the balloting of lists* (Comrade Egorov "had not yet lost his principles"—presumably the principles that made him join forces with Goldblatt in appraising the absolute importance of democratic guarantees) *graphically* demonstrates the highly important fact that *there could be no question of a "direct agreement" even with Egorov.* But a *coalition* there could be, and was, both with Egorov and with Brouckère, a coalition in the sense that the Martovites *were sure* of their support every time they, the Martovites, came into serious conflict with us and Akimov and his friends had to choose the *lesser evil.* There was not and is not the slightest doubt that *Comrades Akimov and Lieber would certainly have voted both for the board of six on the Central Organ and for Martov's list for the Central Committee,* as being *the lesser evil,* as being *what would least achieve the "Iskra" aims* (see Akimov's speech on Paragraph 1 and the "hopes" he placed in Martov). Balloting of lists, allowing two sittings to elapse, and a re-ballot were designed to achieve this very result with almost mechanical certainty without a direct agreement.

But since our compact majority remained a compact majority, Comrade Martov's flank movement would only have meant delay, and we were bound to reject it. The minority poured forth their complaints on this score in a written statement (p. 341) and, *following the example of Martynov and Akimov, refused to vote* in the elections to the Central Committee, "in view of the conditions in which

they were held". Since the Congress, such complaints of abnormal conditions at the elections (see *State of Siege*, p. 31) have been poured right and left into the ears of hundreds of Party gossips. But in what did this *abnormality* consist? In the secret ballot—which had been stipulated beforehand in the Standing Orders of the Congress (Point 6, Minutes, p. 11), and in which it was absurd to detect any "hypocrisy" or "injustice"? In the formation of a compact majority—that "monster" in the eyes of wishy-washy intellectuals? Or in the *abnormal* desire of these worthy intellectuals to *violate the pledge* they had given before the Congress that they would recognise all its elections (p. 380, Point 18 of the Congress Regulations)?

Comrade Popov *subtly* hinted at this desire when he asked outright at the Congress on the day of the elections: "Is the Bureau certain that the decision of the Congress is valid and in order when half the delegates refused to vote?"* The Bureau of course replied that it was certain, and recalled the incident of Comrades Akimov and Martynov. Comrades Martov agreed with the Bureau and explicitly declared that Comrade Popov was mistaken and that "*the decisions of the Congress are valid*" (p. 343). Now let the reader form his own opinion of the political consistency—highly normal, we must suppose—revealed by a comparison of *this declaration made by him in the hearing of the Party* with his behaviour after the Congress and with the phrase in his *State of Siege* about "*the revolt of half the Party which already began at the Congress*" (p. 20). The hopes which Comrade Akimov had placed in Comrade Martov outweighed the ephemeral good intentions of Martov himself.

"*You have conquered,*" Comrade Akimov!

* * *

Certain features, seemingly petty but actually very important, of the *end* of the Congress, the part of it *after* the elections, may serve to show how pure and simple a "dreadful word" was the famous phrase about a "state of siege", which has now for ever acquired a tragicomical meaning. Comrade Martov is now making great play with

* P. 342. This refers to the election of the fifth member of the Council. Twenty-four ballots (out of a total of forty-four votes) were cast, two of which were blank.

this tragicomical "state of siege", seriously assuring both himself and his readers that this bogey of his own invention implied some sort of abnormal persecution, hounding, bullying of the "minority" by the "majority". We shall presently show how matters stood *after* the Congress. But take even the end of the Congress, and you will find that *after the elections,* far from persecuting the unhappy Martovites, who are supposed to have been bullied, ill-treated, and led to the slaughter, the "compact majority" *itself offered* them (through Lyadov) *two seats out of three* on the Minutes Committee (p. 354). Take the resolutions on tactical and other questions (p. 355 et seq.), and you will find that they were discussed on their merits in a purely business-like way, and that the signatories to many of the resolutions included both representatives of the monstrous compact "majority" and followers of the "humiliated and insulted" "minority" (Minutes, pp. 355, 357, 363, 365 and 367). This looks like "shutting out from work" and "bullying" in general, does it not?

The only interesting—but, unfortunately, all too brief—controversy on the substance of a question arose in connection with Starover's resolution on the liberals. As one can see from the signatures to it (pp. 357 and 358), it was adopted by the Congress because three of the supporters of the "majority" (Braun, Orlov, and Osipov) voted both *for it* and for Plekhanov's resolution, not perceiving the irreconcilable contradiction between the two. No irreconcilable contradiction is apparent at first glance, because Plekhanov's resolution lays down a general principle, outlines a definite attitude, as regards principles and tactics, towards *bourgeois liberalism in Russia*, whereas Starover's attempts to define the *concrete conditions in which "temporary agreements" would be permissible* with "liberal or liberal-democratic trends". The subjects of the two resolutions are different. But Starover's suffers from *political vagueness,* and is consequently petty and shallow. It *does not define the class content of Russian liberalism,* does not indicate the *definite* political trends in which this is expressed, does not explain to the proletariat the *principal* tasks of propaganda and agitation in relation to these definite trends; it confuses (owing to its vagueness) such different things as the student movement and *Osvobozhdeniye*,[27] it too pettily and casuistically prescribes *three* concrete

conditions under which "temporary agreements" would be permissible. Here too, as in many other cases, political vagueness leads to casuistry. The absence of any general principle and the attempt to enumerate "conditions" result in a petty and, strictly speaking, *incorrect* specification of these conditions. Just examine Starover's three conditions: 1) the "liberal or liberal-democratic trends" shall "clearly and unambiguously declare that in their struggle against the autocratic government they will resolutely side with the Russian Social-Democrats". What is the difference between the liberal and liberal-democratic trends? The resolution furnishes no material for a reply to this question. Is it not that the liberal trends speak for the politically least progressive sections of the bourgeoisie, and the liberal-democratic—for the more progressive sections of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie? If that is so, can Comrade Starover possibly think that the sections of the bourgeoisie which are least progressive (but progressive nevertheless, for otherwise there could be no talk of liberalism) can "resolutely side with the Social-Democrats"?? That is absurd, and even if the spokesmen of such a trend were to "*declare it clearly and unambiguously*" (an absolutely impossible assumption), we, the party of the proletariat, *would be obliged not to believe* their declarations. To be a liberal and resolutely side with the Social-Democrats—the one excludes the other.

Further, let us assume a case where "liberal or liberal-democratic trends" clearly and unambiguously declare that in their struggle against the autocracy they will resolutely side with the *Socialist-Revolutionaries*. Such an assumption is far less unlikely than Comrade Starover's (owing to the bourgeois-democratic nature of the Socialist-Revolutionary trend). From his resolution, because of its vagueness and casuistry, it would appear that *in a case like this temporary agreements* with such liberals would be *impermissible*. But this conclusion, which follows inevitably from Comrade Starover's resolution, is an *absolutely false* one. Temporary agreements are permissible with the Socialist-Revolutionaries (see the Congress resolution on the latter), and, *consequently*, with liberals who side with the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

Second condition: these trends "shall not include in their programmes any demands running counter to the inter-

ests of the working class or the democracy generally, or obscuring their political consciousness". Here we have the same mistake again: there never have been, nor can there be, liberal-democratic trends which did not include in their programmes demands running counter to the interests of the working class and obscuring its (the proletariat's) political consciousness. Even one of the most democratic sections of our liberal-democratic trend, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, put forward in their programme—a muddled one, like all liberal programmes—demands that run counter to the interests of the working class and obscure its political consciousness. The conclusion to be drawn from this fact is that it is *essential* to "expose the limitations and inadequacy of the bourgeois emancipation movement", but not that temporary agreements are impermissible.

Lastly, in the general form in which it is presented, Comrade Starover's third "condition" (that the liberal-democrats should make universal, equal, secret, and direct suffrage the slogan of their struggle) is likewise *incorrect*: it *would be unwise* to declare impermissible in all cases temporary and partial agreements with liberal-democratic trends whose slogan was a constitution with a qualified suffrage, or a "curtailed" constitution generally. As a matter of fact, the *Osvobozhdeniye* "trend" would fit into just this category, but it would be political shortsightedness incompatible with the principles of Marxism to tie one's hands by forbidding in advance "temporary agreements" with even the most timorous liberals.

To sum up: Comrade Starover's resolution, which was signed also by Comrades Martov and Axelrod, is a *mistake*, and the Third Congress would be wise to rescind it. It suffers from *political vagueness* in its theoretical and tactical position, from casuistry in the practical "conditions" it stipulates. It *confuses two questions*: 1) the exposure of the "anti-revolutionary and anti-proletarian" features of *all* liberal-democratic trends, and the need to *combat* these features, and 2) the *conditions* for temporary and partial *agreements* with any of these trends. It does not give what it should (an analysis of the class content of liberalism), and gives what it should not (prescription of "conditions"). It is absurd in general to draw up detailed "conditions" for temporary agreements at a party con-

gress, when there is not even a definite partner to such possible agreements in view; and even if there were such a definite partner in view, it would be a hundred times more rational to leave the definition of the "conditions" for a temporary agreement to the Party's central institutions, as the Congress did in relation to the Socialist-Revolutionary "trend" (see Plekhanov's modification of the end of Comrade Axelrod's resolution—Minutes, pp. 362 and 15).

As to the objections of the "minority" to Plekhanov's resolution, Comrade Martov's only argument was: Plekhanov's resolution "ends with the paltry conclusion that a particular writer should be exposed. Would this not be 'using a sledgehammer to kill a fly'?" (P. 358.) This argument, whose emptiness is concealed by a smart phrase—"paltry conclusion"—provides a new specimen of pompous phrase-mongering. Firstly, Plekhanov's resolution speaks of "exposing in the eyes of the proletariat the limitations and inadequacy of the bourgeois emancipation movement wherever these limitations and inadequacy manifest themselves". Hence Comrade Martov's assertion (at the League Congress; Minutes, p. 88) that "all attention is to be directed only to Struve, only to one liberal" is the sheerest nonsense. Secondly, to compare Mr. Struve to a "fly" when the possibility of temporary agreements with the Russian liberals is in question, is to sacrifice an elementary and manifest political fact for a smart phrase. No, Mr. Struve is not a fly, but a political magnitude, and not because he personally is such a big figure, but because of his position as the sole representative of Russian liberalism—of at all effectual and organised liberalism—in the illegal world. Therefore, to talk of the Russian liberals, and of what our Party's attitude towards them should be, without having precisely Mr. Struve and *Osvobozhdeniye* in mind is to talk without saying anything. Or perhaps Comrade Martov will show us *even one single* "liberal or liberal-democratic trend" in Russia which could compare even remotely today with the *Osvobozhdeniye* trend? It would be interesting to see him try!*

* At the League Congress Comrade Martov also adduced the following argument against Comrade Plekhanov's resolution: "The chief objection to it, the chief defect of this resolution, is that it totally ignores the fact that it is our duty, in the struggle against

"Struve's name means nothing to the workers," said Comrade Kostrov, supporting Comrade Martov. I hope Comrade Kostrov and Comrade Martov will not be offended—but that argument is fully in the Akimov style. It is like the argument about the proletariat in the genitive case.[28]

Who are the workers to whom Struve's name (and the name of *Osvobozhdeniye*, mentioned in Comrade Plekhanov's resolution alongside of Mr. Struve) "means nothing"? Those who know very little, or nothing at all, of the "liberal and liberal-democratic trends" in Russia. One asks, what should be the attitude of our Party Congress to such workers: should it instruct Party members to acquaint these workers with the only definite liberal trend in Russia; or should it *refrain from mentioning* a name with which the workers are little acquainted because of their little acquaintance with politics? If Comrade Kostrov, having taken one step in the wake of Comrade Akimov, does not want to take another, he will answer this question in the former sense. And having answered it in the former sense, he will see how groundless his argument was. *At any rate,* the words "Struve" and "*Osvobozhdeniye*" in Plekhanov's resolution *are likely to be of much more value* to the workers than the words "liberal and liberal-democratic trend" in Starover's resolution.

Except through *Osvobozhdeniye*, the Russian worker cannot at the present time acquaint himself in practice with anything like a frank expression of the political ten-

---

the autocracy, not to shun alliance with liberal-democratic elements. Comrade Lenin would call this a Martynov tendency. This tendency is already being manifested in the new *Iskra*" (p. 88).

For the wealth of "gems" it contains, this passage is indeed rare. 1) The phrase about *alliance* with the liberals is a sheer muddle. Nobody mentioned alliance, Comrade Martov, but only temporary or partial agreements. That is an entirely different thing. 2) If Plekhanov's resolution ignores an incredible "alliance" and speaks only of "support" in general, that is one of its merits, not a defect. 3) Perhaps Comrade Martov will take the trouble to explain what in general characterises "Martynov tendencies"? Perhaps he will tell us what is the relation between these tendencies and opportunism? Perhaps he will trace the relation of these tendencies to Paragraph 1 of the Rules? 4) I am just burning with impatience to hear from Comrade Martov how "Martynov tendencies" were manifested in the "new" *Iskra*. Please, Comrade Martov, relieve me of the torments of suspense!

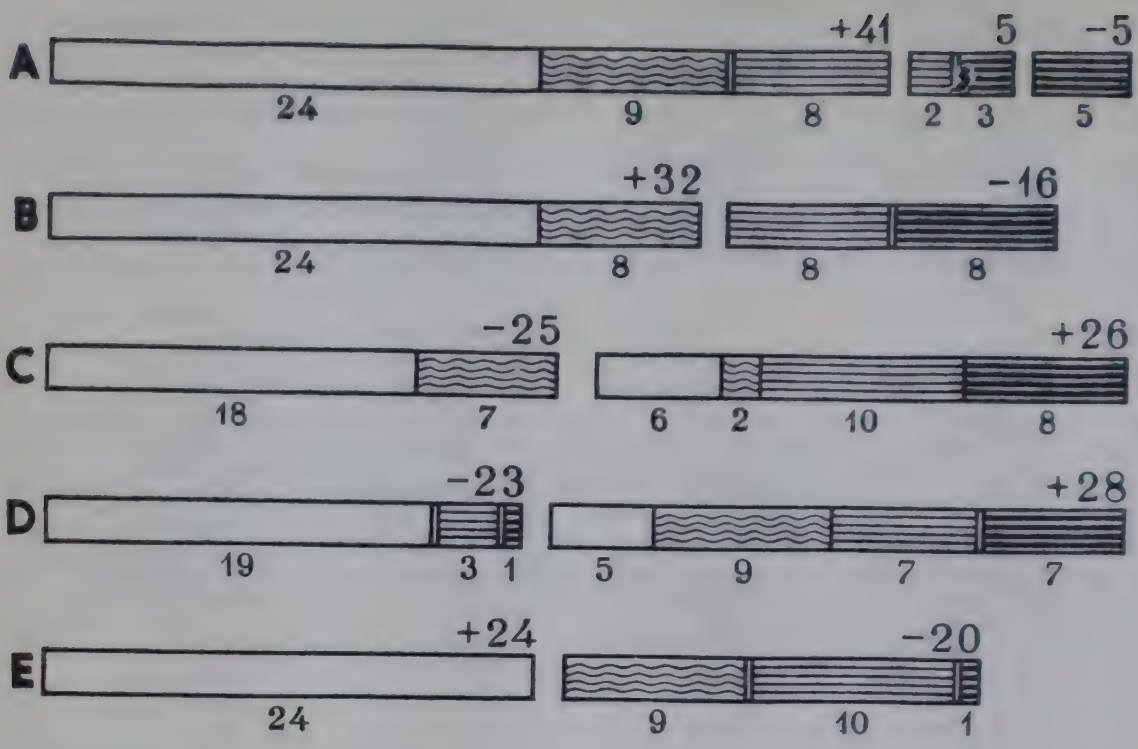
dencies of our liberalism. The legal liberal literature is unsuitable for this purpose because it is so nebulous. And we must as assiduously as possible (and among the broadest possible masses of workers) direct the weapon of our criticism against the *Osvobozhdeniye* gentry, so that when the future revolution breaks out, the Russian proletariat may, with the real criticism of weapons, paralyse the inevitable attempts of the *Osvobozhdeniye* gentry to curtail the democratic character of the revolution.

Apart from Comrade Egorov's "perplexity", mentioned above, over the question of our "supporting" the oppositional and revolutionary movement, the debate on the resolutions offered little of interest; in fact, there was hardly any debate at all.

The Congress ended with a brief reminder from the chairman that its decisions were binding on all Party members.

n) General Picture of the Struggle at the Congress. The Revolutionary and Opportunist Wings of the Party

Having finished our analysis of the Congress debates and voting, we must now sum up, so that we may, on the basis of the *entire* Congress material, answer the question: what elements, groups, and shades went to make up the final majority and minority which we saw in the elections and which were destined for a time to become the main division in our Party? A summary must be made of all the material relating to shades of principle, theoretical and tactical, which the minutes of the Congress provide in such abundance. Without a general "resumé", without a general picture of the Congress as a whole, and of all the principal groupings during the voting, this material is too disjointed, too disconnected, so that at first sight the indi-



The plus and minus signs indicate the total number of votes cast *for* and *against* on a particular issue. The figures below the strips indicate the number of votes cast by each of the four groups. The character of the votings covered by each of the types A to E is explained in the text.

vidual groupings seem accidental, especially to one who does not take the trouble to make an independent and comprehensive *study* of the Congress minutes (and how many readers have taken that trouble?).

In English parliamentary reports we often meet the characteristic word "division". The House "divided" into such and such a majority and minority, it is said when an issue is voted. The "division" of our Social-Democratic House on the various issues discussed at the Congress presents a picture of the struggle within the Party, of its shades of opinion and groups, that is *unique of its kind and unparalleled for its completeness and accuracy*. To make the picture a graphic one, to obtain a real *picture*

instead of a heap of disconnected, disjointed, and isolated facts and incidents, to put a stop to the endless and senseless arguments over particular votings (who voted for whom and who supported whom?), I have decided to try to depict *all the basic* types of "divisions" at our Congress in the form of a *diagram*. This will probably seem strange to a great many people, but I doubt whether any other method can be found that would really generalise and summarise the results in the most complete and accurate manner possible. Which way a particular delegate voted can be ascertained with absolute accuracy in cases when a roll-call vote was taken; and in certain important cases when no roll-call vote was taken it can be determined from the minutes with a very high degree of probability, with a sufficient degree of approximation to the truth. And if we take into account *all* the roll-call votes and all the other votes on issues of any importance (as judged, for example, by the thoroughness and warmth of the debates), we shall obtain the most objective picture of our inner Party struggle that the material at our disposal permits. In doing so, instead of giving a photograph, i.e., an image of each voting separately, we shall try to give a picture, i.e., to present all the main *types* of voting, ignoring relatively unimportant exceptions and variations which would only confuse matters. In any case, anybody will be able with the aid of the minutes to check every detail of our picture, to amplify it with any particular voting he likes, in short, to criticise it not only by arguing, expressing doubts, and making references to isolated incidents, but by drawing a *different picture* on the basis of the same material.

In marking on the diagram each delegate who took part in the voting, we shall indicate by special shading the four main groups which we have traced in detail through the whole of the Congress debates, viz., 1) the *Iskra*-ists of the majority; 2) the *Iskra*-ists of the minority; 3) the "Centre", and 4) the anti-*Iskra*-ists. We have seen the difference in shades of principle between these groups in a *host of instances*, and if anyone does not like the *names* of the groups, which remind lovers of zigzags too much of the *Iskra* organisation and the *Iskra* trend, we can tell them that it is not the name that matters. Now that we have traced the shades through *all* the debates at the Congress,

it is easy to substitute for the already established and familiar Party appellations (which jar on the ears of some) a characterisation of the *essence of the shades between the groups*. Were this substitution made, we would obtain the following names for these same four groups: 1) consistent revolutionary Social-Democrats; 2) minor opportunists; 3) middling opportunists; and 4) major opportunists (major by our Russian standards). Let us hope that these names will be less shocking to those who have latterly taken to assuring themselves and others that *Iskra*-ist is a name which only denotes a "circle", and not a *trend*.

Let us now explain in detail the types of voting "snapped" on this diagram (see diagram: General Picture of the Struggle at the Congress—p. 134).

The first type of voting (A) covers the cases when the "Centre" joined with the *Iskra*-ists against the anti-*Iskra*-ists or a part of them. It includes the vote on the programme as a whole (Comrade Akimov alone abstained, all the others voted for); the vote on the resolution condemning federation in principle (all voted for except the five Bundists); the vote on Paragraph 2 of the Bund Rules (the five Bundists voted against us; five abstained, viz.: Martynov, Akimov, Brouckère, and Makhov with his two votes; the rest were with us); *it is this vote that is represented in diagram A*. Further, the *three* votes on the question of endorsing *Iskra* as the Party's Central Organ were also of this type: the editors (five votes) abstained; in all three cases there were two votes against (Akimov and Brouckère), and, in addition, when the vote on the *motives* for endorsing *Iskra* was taken, the five Bundists and Comrade Martynov abstained.*

This type of voting provides the answer to a very interesting and important question, namely, when did the Congress "Centre" vote with the *Iskra*-ists? It was either when *the anti-"Iskra"-ists, too, were with us*, with a few excep-

* Why was the vote on Paragraph 2 of the Bund Rules taken for depiction in the diagram? Because the votes on endorsing *Iskra* were not as full, while the votes on the programme and on the question of federation referred to political decisions of a less definite and specific character. Speaking generally, the choice of one or another of a number of votes *of the same type* will not in the least affect the main features of the picture, as anyone may easily see by making the corresponding changes.

tions (adoption of the programme, or endorsement of *Iskra* without motives stated), or else when it was a question of the sort of *statement* which was not in itself a direct committal to a definite political position (recognition of *Iskra*'s organising work was not in itself a committal to carry out its organisational policy in relation to particular groups; rejection of the principle of federation did not preclude abstention from voting on a specific scheme of federation, as we have seen in the case of Comrade Makhov). We have already seen, when speaking of the significance of the groupings at the Congress in general, how falsely this matter is put in the official account of the official *Iskra*, which (through the mouth of Comrade Martov) *slurs and glosses over* the difference between the *Iskra*-ists and the "Centre", between consistent revolutionary Social-Democrats and opportunists, by citing *cases when the anti-"Iskra"-ists, too, voted with us*! Even the most "Right-wing" of the opportunists in the German and French Social-Democratic parties never vote against such points as *the adoption of the programme as a whole.*

The second type of voting (B) covers the cases when the *Iskra*-ists, consistent and inconsistent, voted together against all the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the entire "Centre". These were mostly cases that involved giving effect to definite and specific plans of the *Iskra* policy, that is, endorsing *Iskra in fact and not only in word.* They include the *Organising Committee incident**; the question of making the position of the Bund in the Party the first item on the agenda; the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group; two votes on the agrarian programme, and, sixthly and lastly, the vote *against* the Union of Russian Social-

* It is this vote that is depicted in Diagram B; the *Iskra*-ists secured thirty-two votes, the Bundist resolution sixteen. It should be pointed out that of the votes of this type *not one was by roll-call.* The way the individual delegates voted can only be established—but with a very high degree of probability—by two sets of evidence: 1) in the debate the speakers of both groups of *Iskra*-ists spoke in favour, those of the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the Centre against; 2) the number of votes cast *in favour* was always very close to thirty-three. Nor should it be forgotten that when analysing the Congress debates we pointed out, quite apart from the voting, a *number* of cases when the "Centre" sided with the anti-*Iskra*-ists (the opportunists) against us. Some of these issues were: the absolute value of democratic demands, whether we should support the oppositional elements, restriction of centralism, etc.

Democrats Abroad *(Rabocheye Dyelo)*, that is, the recognition of the League as the only Party organisation abroad. The old, pre-Party, circle spirit, the interests of opportunist organisations or groups, the narrow conception of Marxism were fighting here against the strictly consistent and principled policy of revolutionary Social-Democracy; the *Iskra*-ists of the minority still sided with us in quite a number of cases, in a number of exceedingly important votes (important from the standpoint of the Organising Committee, *Yuzhny Rabochy* and *Rabocheye Dyelo*)... until *their own* circle spirit and their own inconsistency came into question. The "divisions" of this type bring out with graphic clarity that on a number of issues involving the practical application of our principles, *the Centre joined forces with the anti-"Iskra"-ists*, displaying a much greater kinship with them than with us, a much greater leaning *in practice* towards the *opportunist* than towards the *revolutionary* wing of Social-Democracy. Those who were *Iskra*-ists *in name* but were ashamed *to be Iskra*-ists revealed their true nature, and the struggle that inevitably ensued caused no little acrimony, which obscured from the less thoughtful and more impressionable the significance of the shades of principle disclosed in that struggle. But now that the ardour of battle has somewhat abated and the minutes remain as a dispassionate extract of a series of heated encounters, only those who wilfully close their eyes can fail to perceive that the alliance of the Makhovs and Egorovs with the Akimovs and Liebers was not, and could not be, fortuitous. The only thing Martov and Axelrod can do is keep well away from a comprehensive and accurate analysis of the minutes, or try at this late date to *undo* their behaviour at the Congress by all sorts of expressions *of regret*. As if regrets can remove differences of views and differences of policy! As if the present alliance of Martov and Axelrod with Akimov, Brouckère, and Martynov can cause our Party, restored at the Second Congress, to forget the struggle which the *Iskra*-ists waged with the anti-*Iskra*-ists almost throughout the Congress!

The distinguishing feature of the third type of voting at the Congress, represented by the three remaining parts of the diagram (C, D, and E), is that *a small section of the "Iskra-"ists broke away and went over to the anti-*

"Iskra"-ists, who accordingly gained the victory (as long as they remained at the Congress). In order to trace with complete accuracy the development of this celebrated *coalition* of the *Iskra*-ist minority with the anti-*Iskra*-ists, the mere mention of which drove Martov to write hysterical epistles at the Congress, we have reproduced all the three main kinds of *roll-call* votes of this type. C is the vote on equality of languages (the last of the three roll-call votes on this question is given, it being the fullest). All the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the whole Centre stand solid against us; from the *Iskra*-ists a part of the majority and a part of the minority break away. *It is not yet clear which of the "Iskra"-ists are capable of forming a definite and lasting coalition with the opportunist "Right wing" of the Congress.* Next comes type D—the vote on Paragraph 1 of the Rules (of the two votes, we have taken the one which was more clear-cut, that is, in which there were no abstentions). *The coalition stands out more saliently and assumes firmer shape*: all* the *Iskra*-ists of the minority are now on the side of Akimov and Lieber, but only a very small number of *Iskra*-ists of the majority, these counterbalancing three of the "Centre" and one anti-*Iskra*-ist who have come over to our side. A mere glance at the diagram suffices to show which elements shifted from side to side casually and temporarily and which *were drawn with irresistible force* towards *a lasting coalition with the Akimovs.* The last vote (E—elections to the Central Organ, the Central Committee, and the Party Council), *which in fact represents the final division into majority and minority,* clearly reveals the complete fusion of the *Iskra*-ist minority with the *entire* "Centre" and the *remnants* of the anti-*Iskra*-ists. By this time, of the eight anti-*Iskra*-ists, *only* Comrade Brouckère remained at the Congress (Comrade Akimov had already explained his mis-

---

* *Judging by all indications, four other votes on the Rules* were of the same type: p 278—27 for Fomin, as against 21 for us; p. 279—26 for Martov, as against 24 for us; p. 280—27 against me, 22 for; and, on the same page, 24 for Martov, as against 23 for us. These are the votes on the question of co-optation to the central bodies, which I have already dealt with. No roll-call votes are available (there was one, but the record of it has been lost). The Bundists (all or part) evidently *saved* Martov. Martov's erroneous statements (at the League) concerning these votes have been corrected above.

take to him and he had taken his proper place in the ranks of the *Martovites).* The withdrawal of the seven *most "Right-wing" of the opportunists* decided the issue of the elections against Martov.*

And now, with the aid of the objective evidence of votes of *every type,* let us sum up the results of the Congress.

There has been much talk to the effect that the majority at our Congress was *"accidental"*. This, in fact, was Comrade Martov's sole consolation in his *Once More in the Minority.* The diagram clearly shows that in *one sense,* but in only one, the majority could be called accidental, viz., in the sense that the withdrawal of the seven most opportunist delegates of the *"Right"* was—supposedly—a matter of *accident. To the extent* that this withdrawal was an accident (and no more), our majority was accidental. A mere glance at the diagram will show better than any long arguments on whose side these seven would have been, *were bound to have been.*** But the question is: how far was the withdrawal of the seven really an accident? That is a question which those who talk so freely about the "accidental" character of the majority do not like to ask themselves. It is an unpleasant question for them. Was it an accident that the most extreme representatives of the *Right* and not of the *Left* wing of our Party were the ones to withdraw? Was it an accident that it was *opportunists* who withdrew, and not consistent *revolutionary Social-Democrats*? Is there no connection between this "accidental" withdrawal and the struggle against the opportunist wing which was waged throughout the Congress and which stands out so graphically in our diagram?

One has only to ask these questions, which are so unpleasant to the minority, to realise what fact all this talk

* The seven opportunists who withdrew from the Second Congress were the five Bundists (the Bund withdrew from the Party after the Second Congress rejected the principle of federation) and two *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists, Comrade Martynov and Comrade Akimov. These latter left the Congress after the *Iskra*-ist League was recognised as the *only* Party organisation abroad, i.e., after the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ist Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad was dissolved. (Author's footnote to the 1907 edition.—*Ed.*)

** We shall see later that *after* the Congress both Comrade Akimov and the Voronezh Committee, which has the closest *kinship* with Comrade Akimov, explicitly expressed their sympathy with the *"minority"*.

about the accidental character of the majority is intended to *conceal*. It is the unquestionable and incontrovertible fact that *the minority was formed of those in our Party who gravitate most towards opportunism*. The minority was formed of those elements in the Party *who are least stable* in theory, *least steadfast in matters of principle*. It was from the *Right wing* of the Party that the minority was formed. The division into majority and minority is a direct and inevitable continuation of that division of the Social-Democrats into a revolutionary and an opportunist wing, into a Mountain and a Gironde,[29] which did not appear only yesterday, nor in the Russian workers' party alone, and which no doubt will not disappear tomorrow.

This fact is of cardinal importance for elucidating the causes and the various stages of our disagreements. Whoever tries to *evade* the fact by denying or glossing over the struggle at the Congress and the shades of principle that it revealed, simply testifies to his own intellectual and political poverty. And in order to *disprove* the fact, it would have to be shown, *in the first place*, that the general picture of the voting and "divisions" at our Party Congress was different from the one I have drawn; and, *in the second place*, that it was the most consistent revolutionary Social-Democrats, those who in Russia have adopted the name of *Iskra*-ists,* who *were in the wrong on the substance* of all those issues over which the Congress "divided". Well, just try to show that, gentlemen!

Incidentally, the fact that the minority was formed of

* Note for Comrade Martov's benefit. If Comrade Martov has now forgotten that the term "*Iskra*-ist implies *the follower of a trend* and not *a member of a circle*, we would advise him to read in the Congress minutes the explanation Comrade Trotsky gave Comrade Akimov on this point. There were three *Iskra*-ist *circles* (in relation to the Party) at the Congress: the Emancipation of Labour group, the *Iskra* editorial board, and the *Iskra* organisation. Two of these three circles had the good sense to dissolve themselves; the third did not display enough Party spirit to do so, and was dissolved by the Congress. The broadest of the *Iskra*-ist circles, the *Iskra* organisation (which included the editorial board and the Emancipation of Labour group), had sixteen members present at the Congress in all, of whom *only eleven* were entitled to vote. *Iskra*-ists *by trend*, on the other hand, not by membership in any *Iskra*-ist "circle", numbered, by my calculation, *twenty-seven, with thirty-three votes*. Hence, *less than half* of the *Iskra*-ists at the Congress belonged to *Iskra*-ist *circles*.

the most opportunist, the least stable and consistent elements of the Party provides an answer to those numerous objections and expressions of doubt which are addressed to the majority by people who are imperfectly acquainted with the matter, or have not given it sufficient thought. Is it not petty, we are told, to account for the *divergence* by a minor mistake of Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod? Yes, gentlemen, Comrade Martov's mistake was a minor one (and I said so even at the Congress, in the heat of the struggle); but this minor mistake *could (and did)* cause a lot of harm because Comrade Martov was pulled over to the side of delegates who had made a *whole series of mistakes,* had manifested an inclination towards opportunism and inconsistency of principle on a whole series of questions. That Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod should have displayed instability was an unimportant fact concerning individuals; it was not an individual fact, however, but a *Party fact,* and a *not altogether unimportant one,* that a very considerable minority should have been formed of *all* the least stable elements, of *all* who either rejected *Iskra*'s trend altogether and openly opposed it, or paid lip service to it but actually sided time and again with the anti-*Iskra*-ists.

Is it not absurd to *account for* the divergence by the prevalence of an inveterate circle spirit and revolutionary philistinism in the small circle comprised by the old *Iskra* editorial board? No, it is not absurd, because *all those in our Party* who all through the Congress had fought *for every kind of circle,* all those *who were generally incapable of rising* above revolutionary philistinism, all those who talked about the "historical" character of the philistine and circle spirit in order to justify and preserve that evil, *rose up* in support of *this particular* circle. The fact that narrow circle interests prevailed over the Party interest in the one little circle of the *Iskra* editorial board might, perhaps, be regarded as an accident; but it was no accident that in staunch support of this circle rose up the Akimovs and Brouckères, who attached no less (if not more) value to the "historical continuity" of the celebrated Voronezh Committee and the notorious St. Petersburg "Workers' Organisation"[30]; the Egorovs, who lamented the "murder" of *Rabocheye Dyelo* as bitterly as the "murder" of the old editorial board (if not more so); the

Makhovs, etc., etc. You can tell a man by his friends—the proverb says. And you can tell a man's *political complexion* by his political allies, by the people who vote for him.

The minor mistake committed by Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod was, and might have remained, a *minor* one until it became the starting-point for a *durable alliance* between them and the whole opportunist wing of our Party, until it led, as a result of that alliance, to a *recrudescence* of opportunism, to the exaction of *revenge* by all whom *Iskra* had fought and who were now overjoyed at a chance of *venting their spleen* on the consistent adherents of revolutionary Social-Democracy. And as a result of the post-Congress events, what we are witnessing in the new *Iskra* is precisely a recrudescence of opportunism, the revenge of the Akimovs and Brouckères (see the leaflet issued by the Voronezh Committee*), and the glee of the Martynovs, who have at last (at last!) been allowed, in the detested *Iskra,* to have a kick at the detested "enemy" for each and every former grievance. This makes it particularly clear how essential it was to "restore *Iskra*'s old editorial board" (we are quoting from Comrade Starover's ultimatum of November 3, 1903) in order to preserve *Iskra* "continuity"....

Taken by itself, there was nothing dreadful, nor critical, nor even anything abnormal in the fact that the Congress (and the Party) divided into a Left and a Right, a revolutionary and an opportunist wing. On the contrary, the whole past decade in the history of the Russian (and not only the Russian) Social-Democratic movement had been leading inevitably and inexorably to such a division. The fact that the division took place over a number of very *minor* mistakes of the Right wing, of (relatively) very unimportant differences (a fact which seems shocking to the superficial observer and to the philistine mind), marked *a big step forward for our Party as a whole.* Formerly we used to differ over major issues, such as might in some cases even justify a split; now we have reached agreement on all major and important points, and are only divided by *shades,* about which we may *and should* argue, but over which it would be absurd and childish to part

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 41, pp. 80-82.—*Ed.*

company (as Comrade Plekhanov has quite rightly said in his interesting article "What Should Not Be Done", to which we shall revert). *Now,* when the *anarchistic behaviour* of the minority *since the Congress* has almost brought the Party to a split, one may often hear wiseacres saying: Was it worth while fighting at the Congress over such trifles as the Organising Committee incident, the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group or *Rabocheye Dyelo,* or Paragraph 1, or the dissolution of the old editorial board, etc.? Those who argue in this way* are in fact introducing the circle standpoint into Party affairs: a struggle of *shades* in the Party is *inevitable and essential,* as long as it does not lead to anarchy and splits, as long as it is confined *within bounds* approved by the common consent of all comrades and Party members. And *our struggle* against the Right wing of the Party *at the Congress,* against Akimov and Axelrod, Martynov and Martov, *in no way exceeded those bounds.* One need only recall two facts which incontrovertibly prove this: 1) when Comrades Martynov and Akimov were about to quit the Congress, *we were all prepared* to do everything to obliterate the idea of an "insult"; *we all adopted* (by thirty-two votes) Comrade Trotsky's motion inviting these comrades to regard the explanations as satisfactory and withdraw their statement; 2) when it came to the election of the central bodies, we were prepared to allow the minority (or the opportunist wing) of the Congress *a minority on both central bodies*: Martov on the Central Organ and Popov on the Central Committee. We *could not* act otherwise from the Party standpoint, since even before the Congress we had decided to elect two trios. *If the difference of shades revealed at*

---

* I cannot help recalling in this connection a conversation I happened to have at the Congress with one of the "Centre" delegates. "How oppressive the atmosphere is at our Congress!" he complained. "This bitter fighting, this agitation one against the other, this biting controversy, this uncomradely attitude!..." "What a splendid thing our Congress is!" I replied. "A free and open struggle. Opinions have been stated. The shades have been revealed. The groups have taken shape. Hands have been raised. A decision has been taken. A stage has been passed. Forward! That's the stuff for me! That's life! That's not like the endless, tedious word-chopping of your intellectuals, which stops not because the question has been settled, but because they are too tired to talk any more...."

The comrade of the "Centre" stared at me in perplexity and shrugged his shoulders. We were talking different languages.

the Congress was not great, neither was the *practical* conclusion we drew from the struggle between these shades: the conclusion amounted *solely* to this, that *two-thirds* of the seats on both bodies of three ought to be given to the *majority* at the Party Congress.

It was only the *refusal* of the minority at the Party Congress to be a *minority on the central bodies* that led first to the "feeble whining" of defeated intellectuals, and then to *anarchistic talk* and anarchistic actions.

In conclusion, let us take one more glance at the diagram from the standpoint of the composition of the central bodies. Quite naturally, *in addition* to the question of shades, the delegates were faced during the elections with the question of the *suitability,* efficiency, etc., of one or another *person.* The minority are now very prone to confuse these two questions. Yet that they are different questions is self-evident, and this can be seen from the simple fact, for instance, that the election of an *initial* trio for the Central Organ had been planned even *before the Congress,* at a time when no one could have foreseen the alliance of Martov and Axelrod with Martynov and Akimov. Different questions have to be answered in different ways: the answer to the question of shades must be sought for in the *minutes of the Congress,* in the *open* discussions and voting on each and every issue. As to the question of the suitability of *persons,* everybody at the Congress had decided that it should be settled by *secret ballot.* Why did *the whole Congress unanimously* take that decision? The question is so elementary that it would be odd to dwell on it. But (since their defeat at the ballot-box) the minority have begun to forget even elementary things. We have heard torrents of ardent, passionate speeches, heated almost to the point of irresponsibility, in defence of the old editorial board, but we have heard *absolutely nothing* about the shades *at the Congress* that were involved in the struggle over a board of six or three. We hear talk and gossip on all sides about the ineffectualness, the unsuitability, the evil designs, etc., of the persons elected to the Central Committee, but we hear *absolutely nothing* about the shades *at the Congress* that fought for predominance on the Central Committee. To me it seems indecent and discreditable to go about talking and gossiping *outside the Congress* about the qualities and actions of

individuals (for in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred these actions are an organisational secret, which can only be divulged to the supreme authority of the Party). To fight *outside the Congress* by means of *such gossip* would. in my opinion, be *scandal-mongering*. And the only public reply I could make to all this talk would be to point to the struggle at the Congress: You say that the Central Committee was elected by a narrow majority. That is true. But this narrow majority consisted of all who had most consistently fought, not in words but in actual fact, for the realisation of the *Iskra* plans. Consequently, the *moral* prestige of this majority should be even higher—incomparably so—than its *formal* prestige—higher in the eyes of all who value the continuity of the *Iskra trend* above the continuity of a particular *Iskra circle*. Who was *more competent to judge* the suitability of particular persons to carry out the *Iskra* policy—those who fought for that policy at the Congress, or those who in no few cases fought against that policy and defended everything retrograde, every kind of old rubbish, every kind of circle mentality?

o) After the Congress. Two Methods of Struggle

The analysis of the debates and voting at the Congress, which we have now concluded, actually explains *in nuce* (in embryo) *everything that has happened since the Congress,* and we can be brief in outlining the subsequent stages of our Party crisis.

The refusal of Martov and Popov to stand for election immediately introduced an atmosphere of *squabbling* into a Party struggle between Party shades. On the very next day after the Congress, Comrade Glebov, thinking it incredible that the unelected editors could seriously have decided to *swing towards* Akimov and Martynov, and attributing the whole thing primarily to irritation, suggested to Plekhanov and me that the matter should be ended peaceably and that all four should be "co-opted" on condition that proper representation of the editorial board on the Council was guaranteed (i. e., that of the two representatives, one was definitely drawn from the *Party* majority). This condition seemed sound to Plekhanov and me,

for its acceptance would imply *a tacit admission of the mistake at the Congress*, a desire for peace instead of war, a desire to be closer to Plekhanov and me than to Akimov and Martynov, Egorov and Makhov. The concession as regards "co-optation" thus became a *personal* one, and it was not worth while refusing to make a personal concession which should clear away the irritation and restore peace. Plekhanov and I therefore consented. But the editorial majority rejected the condition. *Glebov left.* We began to wait and see what would happen next: whether Martov would adhere to the loyal stand he had taken up at the Congress (*against* Comrade Popov, the representative of the Centre), or whether the unstable elements who inclined towards a split, and in whose wake he had followed, would gain the upper hand.

We were faced with the question: would Comrade Martov choose to regard his Congress "coalition" as an isolated political fact (just as, *si licet parva componere magnis*,* Bebel's coalition with Vollmar in 1895 was an isolated case), or would he want to *consolidate* this coalition, exert himself to prove that it was *Plekhanov and I* who were mistaken at the Congress, and become the actual leader of the opportunist wing of our Party? This question might be formulated otherwise as follows: a squabble or a political Party struggle? Of the three of us who on the day after the Congress were the sole available members of the central institutions, Glebov inclined most to the former answer and made the most efforts to reconcile the children who had fallen out. Comrade Plekhanov inclined most to the latter answer and was, as the saying goes, neither to hold nor to bind. I on this occasion acted the part of "Centre", or "Marsh", and endeavoured to employ persuasion. To try at this date to recall the spoken attempts at persuasion would be a hopelessly muddled business, and I shall not follow the bad example of Comrade Martov and Comrade Plekhanov. But I do consider it necessary to reproduce certain passages from one written attempt at persuasion which I addressed to one of the "minority" *Iskra*-ists:

"...The refusal of Martov to serve on the editorial board, his refusal and that of other Party writers to collaborate, the refusal

* If little things may be compared to big.—*Ed.*

of a number of persons to work on the Central Committee, and the propaganda of a boycott or passive resistance are bound to lead, even if against the wishes of Martov and his friends, to a split in the Party. Even if Martov adheres to a loyal stand (which he took up so resolutely at the Congress), others will not, and the outcome I have mentioned will be inevitable....

"And so I ask myself: over what, in point of fact, would we be parting company?... I go over all the events and impressions of the Congress; I realise that I often behaved and acted in a state of frightful irritation, 'frenziedly'; I am quite willing to admit this fault of mine to anyone, if that can be called a fault which was a natural product of the atmosphere, the reactions, the interjections, the struggle, etc. But examining now, quite unfrenziedly, the results attained, the outcome achieved by frenzied struggle, I can detect nothing, absolutely nothing in these results that is injurious to the Party, and absolutely nothing that is an affront or insult to the minority.

"Of course, the very fact of finding oneself in the minority could not but be vexatious, but I categorically protest against the idea that we 'cast slurs' on anybody, that we *wanted* to insult or humiliate anybody. Nothing of the kind. And one should not allow political differences to lead to an interpretation of events based on accusing the other side of unscrupulousness, chicanery, intrigue, and the other nice things we are hearing mentioned more and more often in this atmosphere of an impending split. This should not be allowed, for it is, to say the least, the *nec plus ultra* of irrationality.

"Martov and I have had a political (and organisational) difference, as we had dozens of times before. Defeated over Paragraph 1 of the Rules, I could not but strive with all my might for *revanche* in what remained to me (and to the Congress). I could not but strive, on the one hand, for a strictly *Iskra*-ist Central Committee, and, on the other, for a trio on the editorial board.... I consider this trio the *only* one capable of being an official institution, instead of a body based on indulgence and slackness, the only one to be a real centre, each member of which would always state and defend his Party viewpoint, not one grain more, and irrespective of all personal considerations and all fear of giving offence, of resignations, and so on.

"This trio, after what had occurred at the Congress, undoubtedly meant legitimising a political and organisational line in one respect directed against Martov. Undoubtedly. Cause a rupture on that account? Break up the Party because of it?? Did not Martov and Plekhanov oppose me over the question of demonstrations? And did not Martov and I oppose Plekhanov over the question of the programme? Is not one side of every trio always up against the other two? If the majority of the *Iskra*-ists, both in the *Iskra* organisation and at the Congress, found this particular shade of Martov's line organisationally and politically mistaken, is it not really senseless to attempt to attribute this to 'intrigue', 'incitement', and so forth? Would it not be senseless to try to talk away this fact by *abusing* the majority and calling them 'riffraff'?

"I repeat that, like the majority of the *Iskra*-ists at the Congress, I am profoundly convinced that the line Martov adopted was wrong, and that he had to be corrected To take offence at this

correction, to regard it as an insult, etc., is unreasonable. We have not cast, and are not casting, any 'slurs' on anyone, nor are we excluding anyone *from work*. And to cause a split because someone has been excluded *from a central body* seems to me a piece of inconceivable folly."*

I have thought it necessary to recall these written statements of mine now, because they *conclusively* prove that the majority wanted to draw a definite line *at once* between possible (and in a heated struggle inevitable) personal grievances and personal irritations caused by biting and "frenzied" attacks, etc., on the one hand, and a definite political mistake, a definite political line (coalition with the Right wing), on the other.

These statements prove that the *passive resistance* of the minority *began immediately after the Congress* and at once evoked from us the warning that it was a *step towards splitting the Party*; the warning that it ran directly counter to their *declarations of loyalty at the Congress*; that the split would be solely over *the fact of exclusion from the central institutions* (that is, non-election to them), for nobody ever thought of excluding any Party member *from work*; and that our political difference (an inevitable difference, inasmuch as it had not yet been elucidated and settled which line at the Congress was mistaken, Martov's or ours) was being *perverted more and more into a squabble*, accompanied by abuse, suspicions, and so on and so forth.

But the warnings were in vain. The behaviour of the minority showed that the least stable elements among them, those who *least valued the Party*, were gaining the upper hand. This compelled Plekhanov and me to withdraw the consent we had given to Glebov's proposal. For if the minority were demonstrating by their *deeds* their political instability not only as regards principles, but even as regards *elementary Party loyalty*, what value could be attached to their *talk* about this celebrated "continuity"? Nobody scoffed more wittily than Plekhanov at the utter

---

* This letter was written on *September* 13, 1903 (New Style). (See *Collected Works*, Vol. 34, pp. 164-66.—*Ed.*). I have only omitted what seemed to me irrelevant to the matter in hand. If the addressee considers what I have omitted important, he can easily repair the omission. Incidentally, let me take this opportunity to say that any of my opponents may publish any of my private letters should they think a useful purpose will be served by it.

absurdity of demanding the "co-optation" to the Party editorial board of a majority consisting of people who frankly proclaimed their new and growing differences of opinion! Has there ever been a case in the world of a party majority on the central institutions converting itself into a minority of its own accord, *prior to the airing* of *new* differences in the press, in full view of the Party? Let the differences first be stated, let the Party judge how profound and important they were, let the Party itself correct the mistake it had made at the Second Congress, should it be shown that it had made a mistake! The very fact that such a demand was made *on the plea* of differences still unknown demonstrated the utter instability of those who made it, the complete submersion of political differences by squabbling, and their entire disrespect both for the Party as a whole and for their own convictions. Never have there been, nor will there be, persons of *convinced principle* who refuse to try to *convince* before they secure (*privately*) a majority in the institution they want to bring round to their standpoint.

Finally, on October 4, Comrade Plekhanov announced that he would make a *last* attempt to put an end to this absurd state of affairs. A meeting was called of all the six members of the old editorial board, attended by a new member of the Central Committee.* Comrade Plekhanov spent three whole hours proving how unreasonable it was to demand "co-optation" of four of the "minority" to two of the "majority". He proposed *co-opting two of them*, so as, on the one hand, to remove all fears that we wanted to "bully", suppress, besiege, behead or bury anyone, and, on the other, to safeguard the rights and position of the Party "majority". *The co-optation of two was likewise rejected.*

On October 6, Plekhanov and I wrote the following official letter to all the old editors of *Iskra* and to Comrade Trotsky, one of its contributors:

"Dear Comrades,

"The editorial board of the Central Organ considers it its duty officially to express its regret at your withdrawal from participa-

---

* This Central Committee member[31] arranged, in addition, a number of private and collective talks with the minority, in which he refuted the preposterous tales that were being spread and appealed to their sense of Party duty.

tion in *Iskra* and *Zarya*.[32] In spite of the repeated invitations to collaborate which we made to you immediately following the Second Party Congress and several times after, we have not received a single contribution from you. The editors of the Central Organ declare that your withdrawal from participation is not justified by anything they have done. No personal irritation should serve, of course, as an obstacle to your working on the Central Organ of the Party. If, on the other hand, your withdrawal is due to any differences of opinion with us, we would consider it of the greatest benefit to the Party if you were to set forth these differences at length. More, we would consider it highly desirable for the nature and depth of these differences to be explained to the whole Party as early as possible in the columns of the publications of which we are the editors."*

As the reader sees, it was still quite unclear to us whether the actions of the "minority" were principally governed by personal irritation or by a desire to steer the organ (and the Party) along a *new course*, and if so, what course exactly. I think that if we were even now to set seventy wise men to elucidate this question with the help of any literature or any testimony you like, they too could make nothing of this tangle. I doubt whether a squabble can ever be disentangled: you have either to cut it, or set it aside.**

Axelrod, Zasulich, Starover, Trotsky, and Koltsov sent a couple of lines in reply to this letter of October 6, to the effect that the undersigned were taking no part in *Iskra* since its passage into the hands of the new editorial board. Comrade Martov was more communicative and honoured us with the following reply:

"To the Editorial Board of the Central Organ of the R.S.D.L.P.
"Dear Comrades,

"In reply to your letter of October 6 I wish to state the following: I consider all our discussions on the subject of working together on one organ at an end after the conference which took place in the presence of a Central Committee member on October 4, and at which you refused to state the reasons that induced you to withdraw your proposal to us that Axelrod, Zasulich, Starover, and I

---

* The letter to Comrade Martov contained in addition a reference to a certain pamphlet and the following sentence: "Lastly, we once more inform you, in the interests of the work, that we are still prepared to co-opt you to the editorial board of the Central Organ, in order to give you every opportunity officially to state and defend your views in the supreme institution of the Party."

** Comrade Plekhanov would probably add: "or satisfy *each and every claim* of the initiators of the squabble" We shall see why this was impossible.

should join the editorial board on condition that we undertook to elect Comrade Lenin our 'representative' on the Council. After you repeatedly evaded at this conference formulating the statements you had yourselves made in the presence of witnesses, I do not think it necessary to explain in a letter to you my motives for refusing to work on *Iskra* under present conditions. Should the need arise, I shall explain them in detail to the whole Party, which will already be able to learn from the minutes of the Second Congress why I rejected the proposal, which you now repeat, that I accept a seat on the editorial board and on the Council. . . .*

"L. Martov"

This letter, in conjunction with the previous documents, clarifies beyond any possible dispute that question of boycott, disorganisation, anarchy, and preparations for a split which Comrade Martov (with the help of exclamation marks and rows of dots) so assiduously evades in his *State of Siege*—the question of loyal and disloyal methods of struggle.

Comrade Martov and the others are *invited* to set forth their differences, they are *asked* to tell us plainly what the trouble is all about and what their intentions are, they are *exhorted* to stop sulking and to analyse calmly the mistake made over Paragraph 1 (which is intimately connected with their mistake in swinging to the Right)—but Comrade Martov and Co. *refuse to talk*, and cry: "We are being besieged! We are being bullied!" The jibe about "dreadful words" has not cooled the ardour of these comical outcries.

How is it possible to *besiege* someone who *refuses to work together with you*?—we asked Comrade Martov. How is it possible to ill-treat, "bully", and oppress a minority which *refuses to be a minority*? Being in the minority necessarily and inevitably involves certain disadvantages. These disadvantages are that you either have to join a body which will outvote you on certain questions, or you stay outside that body and attack it, and consequently come under the fire of well-mounted batteries.

Did Comrade Martov's cries about a "state of siege" mean that those in the minority were being fought or governed unfairly and unloyally? *Only such an assertion* could have contained even a grain of sense (in Martov's eyes), for, I repeat, being in the minority necessarily and

* I omit what Martov replied in reference to his pamphlet, then being republished.

inevitably involves certain disadvantages. But the whole comedy of the matter is that Comrade Martov *could not be fought at all* as long as he refused to talk! The minority *could not be governed at all* as long as they refused to be a minority!

Comrade Martov could not cite *a single fact* to show that the editorial board of the Central Organ had exceeded or abused its powers while Plekhanov and I were on it. Nor could the practical workers of the minority cite *a single fact* of a like kind with regard to the Central Committee. However Comrade Martov may now twist and turn in his *State of Siege,* it remains absolutely incontrovertible that *the outcries about a state of siege were nothing but "feeble whining".*

How utterly Comrade Martov and Co. lacked *sensible* arguments against the editorial board appointed by the Congress is best of all shown by their own catchword: "We are not serfs!" (*State of Siege,* p. 34.) The mentality of the bourgeois intellectual, who counts himself among the "elect minds" standing above mass organisation and mass discipline, is expressed here with remarkable clarity. To *explain* their refusal to work in the Party by saying that they "are not serfs" is *to give themselves away completely,* to confess to a total lack of arguments, an utter inability to furnish any motives, any sensible reasons for dissatisfaction. Plekhanov and I declare that their refusal is not justified by anything we have done; we request them to set forth their differences; and all they reply is: "We are not serfs" (adding that no bargain has yet been reached on the subject of co-optation).

To the individualism of the intellectual, which already manifested itself in the controversy over Paragraph 1, revealing its tendency to opportunist argument and anarchistic phrase-mongering, *all* proletarian organisation and discipline seem to be *serfdom.* The reading public will soon learn that in the eyes of these "Party members" and Party "officials" even a new *Party Congress* is a serf institution that is terrible and abhorrent to the "elect minds". . . . This "institution" is indeed terrible to people who are not averse to making use of the Party title but are conscious that this title of theirs *does not accord* with the interests and will of the Party.

The committee resolutions enumerated in my letter to

the editors of the new *Iskra*, and published by Comrade Martov in his *State of Siege*, show with facts that the behaviour of the minority amounted all along to sheer *disobedience* of the decisions of the Congress and *disorganisation* of positive practical work. Consisting of opportunists and people who detested *Iskra*, the minority strove to *rend the Party* and damaged and disorganised its work, thirsting to avenge their defeat at the Congress and sensing that by *honest and loyal* means (by explaining their case in the press or at a congress) they would *never* succeed in refuting the accusation of opportunism and intellectualist instability which at the Second Congress had been levelled against them. Realising that they could not *convince* the Party, they tried to gain their ends by *disorganising* the Party and *hampering all its work*. They were reproached with having (by their mistakes at the Congress) caused a crack in our pot; they replied to the reproach by trying *with all their might to smash* the pot *altogether*.

So distorted had their ideas become that boycott and refusal to work were proclaimed to be "*honest** methods" of struggle. Comrade Martov is now wriggling all around this delicate point. Comrade Martov is such a "man of principle" that he defends boycott... when practised by the minority, but condemns boycott when, his side happening to have become the majority, it threatens Martov himself!

We need not, I think, go into the question whether this is a squabble or a "difference of principle" as to what are honest methods of struggle in a Social-Democratic workers' party.

After the unsuccessful attempts (of October 4 and 6) to obtain an explanation from the comrades who had started the "co-optation" row, nothing remained for the central institutions but to wait and see what would come of their verbal assurances that they would adhere to loyal methods of struggle. On October 10, the Central Committee addressed a circular letter to the League (see League Minutes, pp. 3-5), announcing that it was engaged in drafting Rules for the League and inviting the League

---

* Mining Area resolution (*State of Siege*, p. 38).

members to assist. The Administration of the League had at that time decided against a congress of that body (by two votes to one; *ibid.*, p. 20). The replies received from minority supporters to this circular showed at once that the celebrated promise to be loyal and abide by the decisions of the Congress was just talk, and that, as a matter of fact, the minority had positively decided *not to obey* the central institutions of the Party, replying to their appeals to collaborate with *evasive excuses* full of sophistry and *anarchistic* phrase-mongering. In reply to the famous open letter of Deutsch, a member of the Administration (p. 10), Plekhanov, myself, and other supporters of the majority expressed our vigorous "protest against the gross violations of Party discipline by which an official of the League permits himself to hamper the organisational activities of a Party institution and calls upon other comrades likewise to violate discipline and the Rules. Remarks such as, 'I do not consider myself at liberty to take part in such work on the invitation of the Central Committee', or, 'Comrades, we must on no account allow it [the Central Committee] to draw up new Rules for the League', etc., are agitational methods of a kind that can only arouse disgust in anyone who has the slightest conception of the meaning of the words party, organisation, and party discipline. Such methods are all the more disgraceful for the fact that they are being used against a newly created Party institution and are therefore an undoubted attempt to undermine confidence in it among Party comrades, and that, moreover, they are being employed under the cachet of a member of the League Administration and behind the back of the Central Committee" (p. 17).

Under such conditions, the League Congress promised to be nothing but a brawl.

From the outset, Comrade Martov continued his Congress tactics of "getting personal", this time with Comrade Plekhanov, by distorting private conversations. Comrade Plekhanov protested, and Comrade Martov was obliged to withdraw his accusations (League Minutes, pp. 39 and 134), which were a product of either irresponsibility or resentment.

The time for the report arrived. I had been the League's delegate at the Party Congress. A mere reference to the

summary of my report (p. 43 et seq.)* will show the reader that I gave a rough outline of that analysis of the voting at the Congress which, in greater detail, forms the contents of the present pamphlet. The central feature of the report was precisely the proof that, owing to their mistakes, Martov and Co. had landed in the opportunist wing of our Party. Although this report was made to an audience whose majority consisted of violent opponents, they could discover absolutely nothing in it which departed from loyal methods of Party struggle and controversy.

Martov's report, on the contrary, apart from minor "corrections" to particular points of my account (the incorrectness of these corrections we have shown above), was nothing but—a product of disordered nerves.

No wonder that the majority refused to carry on the fight in this atmosphere. Comrade Plekhanov entered a protest against the "*scene*" (p. 68)—it was indeed a regular "scene"!—and withdrew from the Congress without stating the objections he had already prepared on the substance of the report. Nearly all the other supporters of the majority also withdrew from the Congress, after filing a written protest against the "unworthy behaviour" of Comrade Martov (League Minutes, p. 75).

The methods of struggle employed by the minority became perfectly clear to all. We had accused the minority of committing a political mistake at the Congress, of having swung towards opportunism, of having formed a coalition with the Bundists, the Akimovs, the Brouckères, the Egorovs, and the Makhovs. The minority had been defeated at the Congress, and they had now "worked out" *two* methods of struggle, embracing all their endless variety of sorties, assaults, attacks, etc.

First method—disorganising all the activity of the Party, damaging the work, hampering all and everything "without statement of reasons".

Second method—making "scenes", and so on and so forth.**

---

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, pp. 73-83.—*Ed.*

** I have already pointed out that it would be unwise to attribute to sordid motives even the most sordid manifestations of the squabbling that is so habitual in the atmosphere of émigré and exile colonies. It is a sort of epidemic disease engendered by abnormal conditions of life, disordered nerves, and so on. I *had* to give a true

This "second method of struggle" is also apparent in the League's famous resolutions of "principle", in the discussion of which the "majority", of course, took no part. Let us examine these resolutions, which Comrade Martov has reproduced in his *State of Siege*.

The first resolution, signed by Comrades Trotsky, Fomin, Deutsch, and others, contains two theses directed against the "majority" of the Party Congress: 1) "The League expresses its profound regret that, owing to the manifestation at the Congress of tendencies which essentially run counter to the earlier policy of *Iskra,* due care was not given in drafting the Party Rules to providing sufficient safeguards of the independence and authority of the Central Committee." (League Minutes, p. 83.)

As we have already seen, this thesis of "principle" amounts to nothing but *Akimov* phrase-mongering, the *opportunist* character of which was exposed at the Party Congress *even* by Comrade Popov! In point of fact, the claim that the "majority" did not mean to safeguard the independence and authority of the Central Committee was never anything but *gossip*. It need only be mentioned that when Plekhanov and I were on the editorial board, *there was on the Council no predominance* of the Central Organ over the Central Committee, but when the Martovites joined the editorial board, the Central Organ *secured* predominance over the Central Committee on the Council! When we were on the editorial board, *practical workers in Russia predominated* on the Council over writers residing abroad; since the Martovites took over, the contrary has been the case. When we were on the editorial board, the Council *never once* attempted to interfere in any *practical* matter; since the unanimous co-optation *such interference has begun,* as the reading public will learn in detail in the near future.

Next thesis of the resolution we are examining: "...when constituting the official central bodies of the Party, the Congress ignored the need for maintaining continuity with the actually existing central bodies...."

This thesis boils down to nothing but the question of the *personal* composition of the central bodies. The "minority" preferred to evade the fact that at the Congress

picture of this system of struggle here, because Comrade Martov has *again resorted to it in its full scope in his "State of Siege".*

the old central bodies had proved their unfitness and committed a number of mistakes. But most comical of all is the reference to "continuity" with respect to the Organising Committee. At the Congress, as we have seen, nobody even hinted that the entire membership of the Organising Committee should be endorsed. At the Congress, Martov actually cried in a frenzy that a list containing three members of the Organising Committee was defamatory to him. At the Congress, the *final* list proposed by the "minority" contained *one* member of the Organising Committee (*Popov*, Glebov or Fomin, and Trotsky), whereas the list the "majority" put through contained *two* members of the Organising Committee out of three (*Travinsky, Vasilyev,* and Glebov). We ask, can this reference to "continuity" really be considered a "difference of principle"?

Let us pass to the other resolution, which was signed by four members of the old editorial board, headed by Comrade Axelrod. Here we find all those major accusations against the 'majority" which have subsequently been repeated many times in the press. They can most conveniently be examined as formulated by the members of the editorial circle. The accusations are levelled against "the system of autocratic and bureaucratic government of the Party", against "bureaucratic centralism", which, as distinct from "genuinely Social-Democratic centralism", is defined as follows: it "places in the forefront, not internal union, but external, formal unity, achieved and maintained by purely mechanical means, by the systematic suppression of individual initiative and independent social activity"; it is therefore "by its very nature incapable of organically uniting the component elements of society".

What "society" Comrade Axelrod and Co. are here referring to, heaven alone knows. Apparently, Comrade Axelrod was not quite clear himself whether he was penning a Zemstvo address on the subject of desirable government reforms, or pouring forth the complaints of the "minority". What *is the implication* of "autocracy" in the Party, about which the dissatisfied "editors" clamour? Autocracy means the supreme, uncontrolled, non-accountable, non-elective rule of one individual. We know very well from the literature of the "minority" that by autocrat they mean *me,* and no one else. When the resolution in question was being drafted and adopted, I was on the

Central Organ together with Plekhanov. Consequently, Comrade Axelrod and Co. were expressing the conviction that Plekhanov and all the members of the Central Committee "governed the Party", not in accordance with their own views of what the interests of the work required, but in accordance with the *will* of the autocrat Lenin. This accusation of autocratic government necessarily and inevitably implies pronouncing all members of the governing body except the autocrat to be mere tools in the hands of another, mere pawns and agents of another's will. And once again we ask, is this really a "difference of principle" on the part of the highly respected Comrade Axelrod?

Further, what external, formal unity are they here talking about, our "Party members" just returned from a Party Congress whose decisions they have solemnly acknowledged valid? Do they know of any other method of achieving unity in a party organised on any at all durable basis, except a party congress? If they do, why have they not the courage to declare frankly that they no longer regard the Second Congress as valid? Why do they not try to tell us their new ideas and new methods of achieving unity in a supposedly organised party?

Further, what "suppression of individual initiative" are they talking about, our individualist intellectuals whom the Central Organ of the Party has just been *exhorting* to set forth their differences, but who *instead* have engaged in bargaining about "co-optation"? And, in general, how could Plekhanov and I, or the Central Committee, have suppressed the initiative and independent activity of people who refused to engage in *any* "activity" in conjunction with us? How can anyone be "suppressed" in an institution or body in which he *refuses to have any part*? How could the unelected editors complain of a "system of government" when they refused to "*be governed*"? We *could not* have committed *any* errors in directing our comrades for the simple reason that they never worked under our direction at all.

It is clear, I think, that the cries about this celebrated bureaucracy are just a screen for dissatisfaction with the personal composition of the central bodies, a fig-leaf to cover up the violation of a pledge solemnly given at the Congress. You are a bureaucrat because you were appointed by the Congress not in accordance with my wishes, but

against them; you are a formalist because you take your stand on the formal decisions of the Congress, and not on my consent; you are acting in a grossly mechanical way because you cite the "mechanical" majority at the Party Congress and pay no heed to my wish to be co-opted; you are an autocrat because you refuse to hand over the power to the old snug little band who insist on their circle "continuity" all the more because they do not like the explicit disapproval of this circle spirit by the Congress.

These cries about bureaucracy have never had any *real* meaning except the one I have indicated.* And this method of struggle only proves once again the intellectualist instability of the minority. They wanted to convince the Party that the selection of the central bodies was unfortunate. And how did they go about it? By criticism of *Iskra* as conducted by Plekhanov and me? No, that they were unable to offer. The method they used consisted in the refusal of a section of the Party to work under the direction of the hated central bodies. But no central institution of any party in the world can ever prove its ability to direct people who refuse to accept its direction. Refusal to accept the direction of the central bodies is tantamount to refusing to remain in the Party, it is tantamount to disrupting the Party; it is a method of *destroying*, not of convincing. And these efforts to destroy instead of convince show their lack of consistent principles, lack of faith in their own ideas.

They talk of bureaucracy. The word bureaucracy might be translated into Russian as concentration on place and position. Bureaucracy means subordinating the interests of the *work* to the interests of one's own *career*; it means focusing attention on *places* and ignoring the work itself; it means wrangling over *co-optation* instead of fighting for *ideas*. That bureaucracy of this kind is undesirable and detrimental to the Party is unquestionably true, and I can safely leave it to the reader to judge which of the two sides now contending in our Party is guilty of such bureaucracy. . . . They talk about grossly mechanical methods of achieving unity. Unquestionably, grossly mechanical methods are detrimental; but I again leave it to the

* It is enough to point out that Comrade Plekhanov ceased to be a supporter of "bureaucratic centralism" in the eyes of the minority once he put through the beneficent co-optation.

reader to judge whether a grosser and more mechanical method of struggle of a new trend against an old one can be imagined than installing people in Party institutions before the Party has been convinced of the correctness of their new views, and before these views have even been set forth to the Party.

But perhaps the catchwords of the minority do mean something in principle, perhaps they do express some special group of ideas, irrespective of the petty and particular cause which undoubtedly started the "swing" in the present case? Perhaps if we were to set aside the wrangling over "co-optation", these catchwords might turn out to be an expression of a different system of views?

Let us examine the matter from this angle. Before doing so, we must place on record that the first to attempt such an examination was Comrade Plekhanov at the League, who pointed out the minority's swing towards *anarchism* and *opportunism*, and that Comrade Martov (who is now highly offended because not everyone is ready to admit that his position is one of principle*) preferred *completely to ignore* this incident in his *State of Siege*.

At the League Congress the general question was raised as to whether Rules that the League or a committee may draw up for itself are valid without the Central Committee's endorsement, and even if the Central Committee refuses to endorse them. Nothing could be clearer, one would think: Rules are a formal expression of organisation, and, according to Paragraph 6 of our Party Rules, the right to organise committees is explicitly vested in the Central Committee; Rules define the limits of a com-

* Nothing could be more comical than the new *Iskra's grievance* that Lenin refuses to see any differences of principle, or denies them. If your attitude had been based more on principle, you would the sooner have examined my repeated statements that you have swung towards opportunism. If your position had been based more on principle, you could not well have degraded an ideological struggle to a squabble over places. You have only yourselves to blame, for you have yourselves done everything to make it impossible to regard you as men of principle. Take Comrade Martov, for example: when speaking, in his *State of Siege*, of the League Congress, he says nothing about the dispute with Plekhanov over anarchism, but instead informs us that Lenin is a super-centre, that Lenin has only to wink his eye to have the centre issue orders, that the Central Committee rode roughshod over the League, etc. I have no doubt that by picking his topic in this way, Comrade Martov displayed the profundity of his ideals and principles.

mittee's autonomy, and the decisive voice in defining those limits belongs to the central and not to a local institution of the Party. *That is elementary*, and it was sheer childishness to argue with such an air of profundity that "organising" does not always imply "endorsing Rules" (as if the League itself had not of its own accord expressed the wish to be organised on the basis of formal Rules). But Comrade Martov has forgotten (temporarily, let us hope) even the ABC of Social-Democracy. In his opinion, the demand that Rules should be endorsed only indicated that "the earlier, revolutionary *Iskra* centralism is being replaced by bureaucratic centralism" (League Minutes, p. 95), and there, in fact—Comrade Martov declared in the same speech—lay the "principle" at issue (p. 96)—a principle which he preferred to ignore in his *State of Siege*!

Comrade Plekhanov answered Martov at once, requesting that expressions like bureaucracy, Jack-in-office, etc., be refrained from as "detracting from the dignity of the Congress" (p. 96). There followed an interchange with Comrade Martov, who regarded these expressions as "a characterisation of a certain trend from the standpoint of principle". *At that time*, Comrade Plekhanov, like all the other supporters of the majority, took these expressions at their real value, clearly realising that they related exclusively to the realm, if we may so put it, of "co-optation", and not of principle. However, he deferred to the insistence of the Martovs and Deutsches (pp. 96-97) and proceeded to examine their supposed principles *from the standpoint of principle*. "If that were so," said he (that is, if the committees were autonomous in shaping their organisation, in drawing up their Rules), "they would be autonomous in relation to the whole, to the Party. That is not even a Bundist view, it is a downright anarchistic view. That is just how the anarchists argue: the rights of individuals are unlimited; they may conflict; every individual determines the limits of his rights for himself. The limits of autonomy should be determined not by the group itself, but by the whole of which it forms a part. The Bund was a striking instance of the violation of this principle. Hence, the limits of autonomy are determined by the Congress, or by the highest body set up by the Congress. The authority of the central institution should rest on moral and intellectual prestige. There I, of course,

agree. Every representative of the organisation must be concerned for the moral prestige of its institution. But it does not follow that, while prestige is necessary, authority is not. . . . To counteroppose the power of authority to the power of ideas is anarchistic talk, which should have no place here" (p. 98). These propositions are as elementary as can be, they are in fact axioms, which it was strange even to put to the vote (p. 102), and which were called in question only because "concepts have now been confused" (loc. cit.). But the minority's intellectualist individualism had, inevitably, driven them to the point of wanting to sabotage the Congress, to refuse to submit to the majority; and that wish could not be justified except by *anarchistic talk*. It is very amusing to note that the minority had nothing to offer in reply to Plekhanov but *complaints* of his use of excessively strong words, like opportunism, anarchism, and so forth. Plekhanov quite rightly poked fun at these complaints by asking why "the words Jaurèsism and anarchism are not permissible, and the words *lèse-majesté* and Jack-in-office are". No answer was given. This quaint sort of *quid pro quo* is always happening to Comrades Martov, Axelrod, and Co.: their new catchwords clearly bear the stamp of vexation; any reference to the fact offends them—they are, you see, men of principle; but, they are told, if you deny *on principle* that the part should submit to the whole, you are anarchists, and again they are offended!—the expression is too strong! In other words, they want to give battle to Plekhanov, but only on condition that he does not hit back in earnest!

How many times Comrade Martov and various other "Mensheviks"* have convicted me, no less childishly, of the following "contradiction". They quote a passage from *What Is To Be Done?* or *A Letter to a Comrade* which speaks of ideological influence, a struggle for influence, etc., and contrast it to the "bureaucratic" method of influencing by means of the Rules, to the "autocratic" tendency to rely on authority, and the like. How naïve they are! They have already forgotten that *previously* our Party was not a formally organised whole, but merely a sum of separate groups, and therefore no other relations except those of ideological influence were possible between

* From the Russian *menshinstvo*—"minority", as "Bolshevik" comes from *bolshinstvo*—"majority".—*Tr.*

these groups. *Now* we have become an organised Party, and this implies the establishment of authority, the transformation of the power of ideas into the power of authority, the subordination of lower Party bodies to higher ones. Why, it positively makes one uncomfortable to have to chew over such elementary things for the benefit of old associates, especially when one feels that at the bottom of it all is simply the minority's refusal to submit to the majority in the matter of the elections! But *from the standpoint of principle* these endless exposures of my contradictions boil down to *nothing but* anarchistic phrasemongering. The new *Iskra* is not averse to enjoying the title and rights of a Party institution, but it does not want to submit to the majority of the Party.

If the talk about bureaucracy contains any principle at all, if it is not just an anarchistic denial of the duty of the part to submit to the whole, then what we have here is the *principle of opportunism*, which seeks to lessen the responsibility of individual intellectuals to the party of the proletariat, to lessen the influence of the central institutions, to enlarge the autonomy of the least steadfast elements in the Party, to reduce organisational relations to a purely platonic and verbal acceptance of them. We saw this at the Party Congress, where the Akimovs and Liebers made exactly the same sort of speeches about "monstrous" centralism as poured from the lips of Martov and Co. at the League Congress. That opportunism leads to the Martov and Axelrod "views" on organisation by its very nature, and not by chance, and not in Russia alone but the world over, we shall see later, when examining Comrade Axelrod's article in the new *Iskra*.

p) Little Annoyances Should Not Stand in the Way of a Big Pleasure

The League's rejection of the resolution declaring that its Rules must be endorsed by the Central Committee (League Minutes, p. 105) was, as the Party Congress majority at once unanimously noted, a "*crying violation of the Party Rules*". Regarded as the act of men of principle, this violation was sheer anarchism; while in the atmosphere of the post-Congress struggle, it inevitably

created the impression that the Party minority were trying to "settle scores" with the Party majority (League Minutes, p. 112); it meant that they did not wish to obey the Party or to remain within the Party. And when the League refused to adopt a resolution on the Central Committee statement calling for changes in its Rules (pp. 124-25), it inevitably followed that this assembly, which wanted to *be counted* an assembly of a Party organisation but at the same time not to obey the Party's central institution, had to be pronounced *unlawful*. Accordingly, the followers of the Party majority at once withdrew from this quasi-Party assembly, so as not to have any share in an indecent farce.

The individualism of the intellectual, with its platonic acceptance of organisational relations, which was revealed in the lack of steadfastness over Paragraph 1 of the Rules, thus in practice reached the logical end I had predicted even in September, that is, a month and a half before, namely, the point of *disrupting* the Party organisation. And at that moment, on the evening of the day the League Congress ended, Comrade Plekhanov announced to his colleagues on both the Party's central institutions that he could not bear to "fire on his comrades", that "rather than have a split, it is better to put a bullet in one's brain", and that, to avert a greater evil, it was necessary to make the maximum personal concessions, over which, in point of fact (much more than over the principles to be discerned in the incorrect position on Paragraph 1), this destructive struggle was being waged. In order to give a more accurate characterisation of Comrade Plekhanov's right-about-face, which has acquired a certain general Party significance, I consider it advisable to rely not on private conversations, nor on private letters (that last resort in extremity), but on Plekhanov's own statement of the case to the whole Party, namely, his article "What Should Not Be Done" in No. 52 of *Iskra*, which was written just after the League Congress, after I had resigned from the editorial board of the Central Organ (November 1, 1903), and before the co-optation of the Martovites (November 26, 1903).

The fundamental idea of "What Should Not Be Done" is that in politics one must not be too stiff-necked, too harsh and unyielding; that it is sometimes necessary, to

avoid a split, to yield even to revisionists (among those moving towards us or among the inconsistents) and to anarchistic individualists. It was only natural that these abstract generalities should arouse universal perplexity among *Iskra* readers. One cannot help laughing when reading the proud and majestic statements of Comrade Plekhanov (in subsequent articles) that he had not been understood because of the novelty of his ideas and because people lacked a knowledge of dialectics. In reality, "What Should Not Be Done" could only be understood, at the time it was written, by some dozen people living in two Geneva suburbs whose names both begin with the same letter.[33] Comrade Plekhanov's misfortune was that he put into circulation among some ten thousand readers an agglomeration of hints, reproaches, algebraical symbols, and riddles which were intended only for these dozen or so people who had taken part in all the developments of the post-Congress struggle with the minority. This misfortune befell Comrade Plekhanov because he violated a basic principle of that dialectics to which he so unluckily referred, namely, that there is no abstract truth, that truth is always concrete. That is why it was out of place to lend an abstract form to the perfectly concrete idea of yielding to the Martovites after the League Congress.

Yielding—which Comrade Plekhanov advocated as a new war-cry—is legitimate and essential in two cases: when the yielder is convinced that those who are striving to make him yield are in the right (in which case honest political leaders frankly and openly admit their mistake), or when an irrational and harmful demand is yielded to in order to avert a greater evil. It is perfectly clear from the article in question that it is the latter case the author has in mind: he speaks plainly of yielding to revisionists and anarchistic individualists (that is, to the Martovites, as every Party member now knows from the League Minutes), and says that it is essential in order to avert a split. As we see, Comrade Plekhanov's supposedly novel idea amounts to no more than the not very novel piece of commonplace wisdom that little annoyances should not be allowed to stand in the way of a big pleasure, that a little opportunist folly and a little anarchistic talk is better than a big Party split. When Comrade Plekhanov wrote this article he clearly realised that the minority represented

the opportunist wing of our Party and that they were fighting with anarchistic weapons. Comrade Plekhanov came forward with the plan to combat this minority by means of personal concessions, just as (again *si licet parva componere magnis*) the German Social-Democrats combated Bernstein. Bebel publicly declared at congresses of his Party that he did not know anyone who was so susceptible to the influence of environment as Comrade Bernstein (not Mr. Bernstein, as Comrade Plekhanov was once so fond of calling him, but Comrade Bernstein): let us take him into our environment, let us make him a member of the Reichstag, let us combat revisionism, not by inappropriate harshness (*à la* Sobakevich-Parvus[34]) towards the revisionist, but by "killing him with kindness"—as Comrade M. Beer, I recall, put it at a meeting of English Social-Democrats when defending German conciliatoriness, peaceableness, mildness, flexibility, and caution against the attack of the English Sobakevich—Hyndman. And in just the same way, Comrade Plekhanov wanted to "kill with kindness" the little anarchism and the little opportunism of Comrades Axelrod and Martov. True, while hinting quite plainly at the "anarchistic individualists", Comrade Plekhanov expressed himself in a deliberately vague way about the revisionists; be did so in a manner to create the impression that he was referring to the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists, who were swinging from opportunism towards orthodoxy, and not to Axelrod and Martov, who had begun to swing *from orthodoxy towards revisionism*. But this was only an innocent military ruse,*

---

* There was never any question after the Party Congress of making concessions to Comrades Martynov, Akimov, and Brouckère. I am not aware that they too demanded "co-optation". I even doubt whether Comrade Starover or Comrade Martov consulted Comrade Brouckère when they sent us their epistles and "notes" in the name of "half the Party".... At the League Congress Comrade Martov rejected, with the profound indignation of an unbending political stalwart, the very idea of a "union with Ryazanov or Martynov", of the possibility of a "deal" with them, or even of joint "service to the Party" (as an editor; League Minutes, p. 53). At the League Congress Comrade Martov sternly condemned "Martynov tendencies" (p. 88), and when Comrade Orthodox[35] subtly hinted that Axelrod and Martov no doubt "consider that Comrades Akimov, Martynov, and others also have the right to get together, draw up Rules for themselves, and act in accordance with them as they see fit" (p. 99), the Martovites denied it, as Peter denied Christ (p. 100:

a feeble bulwark that was incapable of withstanding the artillery fire of Party publicity.

And anyone who acquaints himself with the actual state of affairs at the political juncture we are describing, anyone who gains an insight into Comrade Plekhanov's mentality, will realise that I could not have acted in this instance otherwise than I did. I say this for the benefit of those supporters of the majority who have reproached me for surrendering the editorial board. When Comrade Plekhanov swung round after the League Congress and from being a supporter of the majority became a supporter of reconciliation at all costs, I was obliged to put the very best interpretation on it. Perhaps Comrade Plekhanov wanted in his article to put forward a programme for an amicable and honest peace? Any such programme boils down to a sincere admission of mistakes by both sides. What was the mistake Comrade Plekhanov laid at the door of the majority? An inappropriate, Sobakevich-like, harshness towards the revisionists. We do not know what Comrade Plekhanov had in mind by that: his witticism about the asses, or his extremely incautious—in Axelrod's presence—reference to anarchism and opportunism. Comrade Plekhanov preferred to express himself "abstractly", and, moreover, with a hint at the other fellow. That is a matter of taste, of course. But, after all, I had admitted my personal harshness openly both in the letter to the *Iskra*-ist and at the League Congress. How then could I refuse to admit that the majority were guilty of such a "mistake"? As to the minority, Comrade Plekhanov pointed to their mistake quite clearly, namely, revisionism (cf. his remarks about opportunism at the Party Congress and about Jaurèsism at the League Congress) and anarchism which had led to the verge of a split. Could I obstruct an attempt to secure an acknowledgement of these mistakes and undo their harm by means of personal concessions and "kindness" in general? Could I obstruct such an attempt when Comrade Plekhanov in "What Should Not Be Done" directly appealed to us to "*spare the adversaries*" among the revisionists who were revisionists "only because of a certain inconsistency"? And if I did not believe

---

"Comrade Orthodox's fears" "regarding the Akimovs, Martynovs, etc", "have no foundation").

in this attempt, could I do otherwise than make a personal concession regarding the Central Organ and move over to the Central Committee in order to defend the position of the majority?* I could not absolutely deny the feasibility of such attempts and take upon myself the full onus for the threatening split, if only because I had myself been inclined, in the letter of October 6, to attribute the wrangle to "personal irritation". But I did consider, and still consider, it my political duty to defend the position of the majority. To rely in this on Comrade Plekhanov would have been difficult and risky, for everything went to show that he was prepared to interpret his dictum that "a leader of the proletariat has no right to give rein to his warlike inclinations when they run counter to political good sense"—to interpret it in a dialectical way to mean that if you had to fire, then it was better sense (considering the state of the weather in Geneva in November) to fire at the majority.... To defend the majority's position was essential, because, when dealing with the question of the free (?) will of a revolutionary, Comrade Plekhanov—in defiance of dialectics, which demands a concrete and comprehensive examination—modestly evaded the question of *confidence in a revolutionary*, of confidence in a "leader of the proletariat" who was leading a definite wing of the Party. When speaking of anarchistic individualism and advising us to close our eyes "at times" to violations of discipline and to yield "sometimes" to intellectualist license, which "is rooted in a sentiment that

* Comrade Martov put it very aptly when he said that I had moved over *avec armes et bagages*. Comrade Martov is very fond of military metaphors: campaign against the League, engagement, incurable wounds, etc., etc. To tell the truth, I too have a great weakness for military metaphors, especially just now, when one follows the news from the Pacific with such eager interest. But, Comrade Martov, if we are to use military language, the story goes like this. We capture two forts at the Party Congress. You attack them at the League Congress. After the first brief interchange of shots, my colleague, the commandant of one of the forts, opens the gates to the enemy. Naturally, I gather together the little artillery I have and move into the other fort, which is practically unfortified, in order to "stand siege" against the enemy's overwhelming numbers. I even make an offer of peace, for what chance do I stand against two powers? But in reply to my offer, the new allies bombard my last fort. I return the fire. Whereupon my former colleague—the commandant—exclaims in magnificent indignation: "Just look, good people, how bellicose this Chamberlain is!"

has nothing to do with devotion to the revolutionary idea", Comrade Plekhanov apparently forgot that we must also reckon with the free will of the majority of the Party, and that it must be left *to the practical workers* to determine the *extent* of the concessions to be made to the anarchistic individualists. Easy as it is to fight childish anarchistic nonsense on the literary plane, it is very difficult to carry on practical work in the same organisation with an anarchistic individualist. A writer who took it upon himself to determine the extent of the concessions that might be made to anarchism in practice would only be betraying his inordinate and truly doctrinaire literary conceit. Comrade Plekhanov majestically remarked (for the sake of importance, as Bazarov[36] used to say) that if a new split were to occur the workers would cease to understand us; yet at the same time he initiated an endless stream of articles in the new *Iskra* whose real and concrete meaning was bound to be incomprehensible not only to the workers, but to the world at large. It is not surprising that when a member of the Central Committee read the proofs of "What Should Not Be Done" he warned Comrade Plekhanov that his plan to somewhat curtail the size of a certain publication (the minutes of the Party Congress and the League Congress) would be defeated by this very article, which would excite curiosity, offer for the judgement of the man in the street something that was piquant and at the same time quite incomprehensible to him,* and inevitably cause people to ask in perplexity: "What has happened?" It is not surprising that owing to the abstractness of its arguments and the vagueness of its hints, this article of Comrade Plekhanov's caused jubilation in the ranks of the enemies of Social-Democracy—the dancing of the *cancan* in the columns of *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya*[38]

---

* We are having a heated and passionate argument in private. Suddenly one of us jumps up, flings open the window, and begins to clamour against Sobakeviches, anarchistic individualists, revisionists, etc. Naturally, a crowd of curious idlers gathers in the street and our enemies rub their hands in glee. Other of the disputants go to the window too and want to give a coherent account of the whole matter, without hinting at things nobody knows anything about. Thereupon the window is banged to on the plea that it is not worth while discussing *squabbles* (*Iskra*, No. 53, p. 8, col. 2, line 24 up). It was not worth while *beginning in "Iskra"* on a discussion of "squabbles", Comrade Plekhanov[37]—that would be nearer the truth!

and ecstatic praises from the consistent revisionists in *Osvobozhdeniye*. The source of all these comical and sad misunderstandings, from which Comrade Plekhanov later tried so comically and so sadly to extricate himself, lay precisely in the violation of that basic principle of dialectics: concrete questions should be examined in all their concreteness. The delight of Mr. Struve, in particular, was quite natural: he was not in the least interested in the "good" aims (killing with kindness) which Comrade Plekhanov pursued (but might not achieve); Mr. Struve welcomed, and could not but welcome, that *swing towards the opportunist wing of our Party* which had begun in the new *Iskra*, as everybody can now plainly see. The Russian bourgeois democrats are not the only ones to welcome every swing towards opportunism, even the slightest and most temporary, in any Social-Democratic party. The estimate of a shrewd enemy is very rarely based on sheer misunderstanding: you can tell a man's mistakes by the people who praise him. And it is in vain that Comrade Plekhanov hopes the reader will be inattentive and tries to make out that the majority unconditionally objected to a personal concession in the matter of co-optation, and not to a desertion from the Left wing of the Party to the Right. The point is not that Comrade Plekhanov made a personal concession in order to avert a split (that was very praiseworthy), but that, though fully realising the need to *join issue* with the inconsistent revisionists and anarchistic individualists, he chose instead to join issue with the majority, with whom he parted company *over the extent* of the possible practical concessions to anarchism. The point is not that Comrade Plekhanov changed the personal composition of the editorial board, but that he betrayed his position of opposing revisionism and anarchism and ceased to defend that position in the Central Organ of the Party.

As to the Central Committee, which *at this time* was the sole organised representative of the majority, Comrade Plekhanov parted company with it then *exclusively over the possible extent of practical concessions to anarchism.* Nearly a month had elapsed since November 1, when my resignation had given a free hand to the policy of killing with kindness. Comrade Plekhanov had had every opportunity, through all sorts of contacts, to test the expedience of this policy. Comrade Plekhanov had in this period pub-

lished his article "What Should Not Be Done", which was —*and remains*—the Martovites' sole ticket of admittance, so to speak, to the editorial board. The watchwords—revisionism (which we should contend with, but sparing the adversary) and anarchistic individualism (which should be courted and killed with kindness)—were printed on this ticket in imposing italics. Do come in, gentlemen, please, I will kill you with kindness—is what Comrade Plekhanov said by this invitation card to his new colleagues on the editorial board. Naturally, all that remained to the Central Committee was to say its last word (that is what ultimatum means—a last word as to a possible peace) about what, in its opinion, was the permissible extent of practical concessions to anarchistic individualism. Either you want peace—in which case here are a certain number of seats to prove our kindness, peaceableness, readiness to make concessions, etc. (we cannot allow you any more if peace is to be guaranteed in the Party, peace not in the sense of an absence of controversy, but in the sense that the Party will not be destroyed by anarchistic individualism); take these seats and swing back again little by little from Akimov to Plekhanov. Or else you want to maintain and develop your point of view, to swing over altogether to Akimov (if only in the realm of organisational questions), and to convince the Party that you, not Plekhanov, are right—in which case form a writers' group of your own, secure representation at the next Congress, and set about winning a majority by an honest struggle, by open controversy. This alternative, which was quite explicitly submitted to the Martovites in the Central Committee ultimatum of November 25, 1903[39] (see *State of Siege* and *Commentary on the League Minutes*)*, was

* I shall not, of course, go into the tangle Martov created over this Central Committee ultimatum in his *State of Siege* by quoting private conversations and so on. This is the "second method of struggle" I described in the previous section, which only a specialist in nervous disorders could hope to disentangle. It is enough to say that Comrade Martov insists that there was an agreement with the Central Committee not to publish the negotiations, which agreement has not been discovered to this day in spite of a most assiduous search. Comrade Travinsky, who conducted the negotiations on behalf of the Central Committee, informed me in writing that he considered me entitled to publish my letter to the editors outside of *Iskra*.

But there was one phrase of Comrade Martov's that I particularly liked. That was the phrase "Bonapartism of the worst type".

in full harmony with the letter Plekhanov and I had sent to the former editors on October 6, 1903: either it is a matter of personal irritation (in which case, *if the worst comes to the worst*, we might even "co-opt"), or it is a matter of a difference of principle (in which case you must *first* convince the Party, and only then talk about changing the personal composition of the central bodies). The Central Committee could the more readily leave it to the Martovites to make this delicate choice for themselves since *at this very time* Comrade Martov in his *profession de foi (Once More in the Minority)* wrote the following:

"*The minority lay claim to only one honour*, namely, to be the first in the history of our Party to show that one can be 'defeated' *and yet not form a new party*. This position of the minority follows from all their views on the organisational development of the Party; it follows from the consciousness of their strong ties with the Party's earlier work. The minority do not believe in the mystic power of 'paper revolutions', and see in the *deep roots* which their endeavours have *in life* a guarantee that *by purely ideological propaganda within the Party they will secure the triumph of their principles of organisation*". (My italics.)

What proud and magnificent words! And how bitter it was to be taught by events that they were—*merely words*. . . . I hope you will forgive me, Comrade Martov, but now *I claim on behalf of the majority* this "honour" which *you have not deserved*. The honour will indeed be a great one, one worth fighting for, for the circles have left us the tradition of an extraordinarily light-hearted attitude towards splits and an extraordinarily zealous ap-

---

I find that Comrade Martov has brought in this category very appropriately. Let us examine dispassionately what the concept implies. In my opinion, it implies acquiring power by *formally* legal means, but *actually* in defiance of the will of the people (or of a party). Is that not so, Comrade Martov? And if it is, then I may safely leave it to the public to judge who has been guilty of this "Bonapartism of the worst type": Lenin and Comrade Y,[40] who might have availed themselves of their *formal* right not to admit the Martovites, but *did not avail themselves* of it, though in doing so they would have been backed by the will of the Second Congress—or those who occupied the editorial board by *formally legitimate means* ("unanimous co-optation"), but who knew that *actually this was not in accordance with the will of the Second Congress* and who are afraid to have this will tested at the Third Congress.

plication of the maxim: 'either coats off, or let's have your hand!"

The big pleasure (of having a united Party) was bound to outweigh, and did outweigh, the little annoyances (in the shape of the squabbling over co-optation). I resigned from the Central Organ, and Comrade Y (who had been delegated by Plekhanov and myself to the Party Council on behalf of the editorial board of the Central Organ) resigned from the Council. The Martovites replied to the Central Committee's last word as to peace with a letter (see publications mentioned) which was tantamount to a declaration of war. Then, and only then, did I write my letter to the editorial board (*Iskra*, No. 53) on the subject of publicity.* If it comes to talking about revisionism and discussing inconsistency, anarchistic individualism, and the defeat of various leaders, then, gentlemen, let us tell all that occurred, without reservation—that was the gist of this letter about publicity. The editorial board replied with angry abuse and the lordly admonition: do not dare to stir up "*the pettiness and squabbling of circle life*" (*Iskra*, No. 53). Is that so, I thought to myself: "the pettiness and squabbling of circle life"? . . . Well, *es ist mir recht*, gentlemen, there I agree with you. Why, that means that you directly class all this fuss over "co-optation" as *circle squabbling*. That is true. But what discord is this?—in the editorial of this same issue, No. 53, this same editorial board (we must suppose) talks about bureaucracy, formalism, and the rest.** Do not dare to raise the question of the fight for co-optation to the Central Organ, for that would be squabbling. But we will raise the question of co-optation to the Central Committee, and will not call it squabbling, but a difference of principle on the subject of "formalism". No, dear comrades, I said to myself, per-

---

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, pp. 115-18.—*Ed.*

** As it subsequently turned out, the "discord" was explained very simply—it was a discord among the editors of the Central Organ. It was Plekhanov who wrote about "squabbling" (see his admission in "A Sad Misunderstanding", No. 57), while the editorial, "Our Congress", was written by Martov (*State of Siege*, p. 84). They were tugging in different directions.

mit me not to permit you that. You want to fire at my fort, and yet demand that I surrender my artillery. What jokers you are! And so I wrote and published outside of *Iskra* my *Letter to the Editors (Why I Resigned from the "Iskra" Editorial Board),** briefly relating what had really occurred, and asking yet again whether peace was not possible on the basis of the following division: you take the Central Organ, we take the Central Committee. Neither side will then feel "alien" in the Party, and we will argue about the swing towards opportunism, first in the press, and then, perhaps, at the Third Party Congress.

In reply to this mention of peace the enemy opened fire with all his batteries, including even the Council. Shells rained on my head. Autocrat, Schweitzer, bureaucrat, formalist, super-centre, one-sided, stiff-necked, obstinate, narrow-minded, suspicious, quarrelsome.... Very well, my friends! Have you finished? You have nothing more in reserve? Poor ammunition, I must say....

Now comes my turn. Let us examine the *content* of the new *Iskra*'s new views on organisation and the relation of these views to that division of our Party into "majority" and "minority" the true character of which we have shown by our analysis of the debates and voting at the Second Congress.

q) The New *Iskra*
Opportunism in Questions of Organisation

As the basis for an analysis of the principles of the new *Iskra* we should unquestionably take the two articles of Comrade Axelrod.** The concrete meaning of some of his favourite catchwords has already been shown at length. Now we must try to leave their concrete meaning on one side and delve down to the line of thought that caused the "minority" to arrive (in connection with this or that minor and petty matter) at these particular slogans rather than any others, must examine the principles behind these

---

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, pp. 119-25.—*Ed.*

** These articles were included in the collection "*Iskra*" *over Two Years*, Part II, p. 122 et seq. (St. Petersburg, 1906). (Author's note to 1907 edition.—*Ed.*)

slogans, irrespective of their origin, irrespective of the question of "co-optation". Concessions are all the fashion nowadays, so let us make a concession to Comrade Axelrod and take his "theory" "seriously".

Comrade Axelrod's basic thesis (*Iskra*, No. 57) is that "from the very outset our movement harboured two opposite trends, whose mutual antagonism could not fail to develop and to affect the movement parallel with its own development". To be specific: "In principle, the proletarian aim of the movement [in Russia] is the same as that of western Social-Democracy." But in our country the masses of the workers are influenced "by a social element alien to them", namely, the radical intelligentsia. And so, Comrade Axelrod establishes the existence of an antagonism between the proletarian and the radical-intellectual trend in our Party.

In this Comrade Axelrod is undoubtedly right. The existence of such an antagonism (and not in the Russian Social-Democratic Party alone) is beyond question. What is more, everyone knows that it is this antagonism that largely accounts for the division of present-day Social-Democracy into revolutionary (also known as orthodox) and opportunist (revisionist, ministerialist, reformist) Social-Democracy, which during the past ten years of our movement has become fully apparent in Russia too. Everyone also knows that the proletarian trend of the movement is expressed by orthodox Social-Democracy, while the trend of the democratic intelligentsia is expressed by opportunist Social-Democracy.

But, after so closely approaching this piece of common knowledge, Comrade Axelrod begins timidly to back away from it. He does not make *the slightest attempt* to analyse how this division manifested itself in the history of Russian Social-Democracy in general, and at our Party Congress in particular, although it is about the Congress that he is writing! Like all the other editors of the new *Iskra*, Comrade Axelrod displays a *mortal fear* of the minutes of this Congress. This should not surprise us after all that has been said above, but in a "theoretician" who claims to be investigating the different trends in our movement it is certainly a queer case of *truth-phobia*. Backing away, because of this malady, from the latest and most accurate material on the trends in our movement, Comrade Axel-

rod seeks salvation in the sphere of pleasant daydreaming. He writes: "Has not legal Marxism, or semi-Marxism, provided our liberals with a literary leader? Why should not prankish history provide revolutionary bourgeois democracy with a leader from the school of orthodox, revolutionary Marxism?" All we can say about this daydream which Comrade Axelrod finds so pleasant is that if history does sometimes play pranks, that is no excuse for *pranks of thought* on the part of people who undertake to analyse history. When the liberal peeped out from under the cloak of the leader of semi-Marxism, those who wished *(and were able)* to trace his "trend" did not allude to possible pranks of history, but pointed to tens and hundreds of instances of that leader's mentality and logic, to all those characteristics of his literary make-up which betrayed the reflection of Marxism in bourgeois literature.[41] And if Comrade Axelrod, setting out to analyse "the general-revolutionary and the proletarian trend in our movement", could produce *nothing, absolutely nothing,* in proof or evidence that certain representatives of that orthodox wing of the Party which he so detests showed such-and-such a trend, he thereby issued *a formal certificate of his own poverty.* Comrade Axelrod's case must be weak indeed if all he can do is allude to possible pranks of history!

Comrade Axelrod's other allusion—to the "Jacobins"—is still more revealing. Comrade Axelrod is probably aware that the division of present-day Social-Democracy into revolutionary and opportunist has long since given rise—and not only in Russia—to "historical parallels with the era of the great French Revolution". Comrade Axelrod is probably aware that the *Girondists of present-day Social-Democracy* everywhere and always resort to the terms "Jacobinism", "Blanquism", and so on to describe their opponents. Let us then not imitate Comrade Axelrod's truth-phobia, let us consult the minutes of our Congress and see whether they offer any material for an analysis and examination of the trends we are considering and the parallels we are discussing.

First example: the Party Congress debate on the programme. Comrade Akimov ("fully agreeing" with Comrade Martynov) says: "The clause on the capture of political power [the dictatorship of the proletariat] has been formulated in such a way—as compared with the pro-

grammes of all other Social-Democratic parties—that it may be interpreted, and actually has been interpreted by Plekhanov, to mean that the role of the leading organisation will relegate to the background the class it is leading and separate the former from the latter. Consequently, the formulation of our political tasks is exactly the same as in the case of Narodnaya Volya." (Minutes, p. 124.) Comrade Plekhanov and other *Iskra*-ists take issue with Comrade Akimov and accuse him of opportunism. Does not Comrade Axelrod find that this dispute shows us (in actual fact, and not in the imaginary pranks of history) the antagonism between the *present-day Jacobins* and the present-day *Girondists* of Social-Democracy? And was it not because he found himself in the company of the *Girondists* of Social-Democracy (owing to the mistakes he committed) that Comrade Axelrod began talking about Jacobins?

Second example: Comrade Posadovsky declares that there is a "serious difference of opinion" over the "fundamental question" of "the absolute value of democratic principles" (p. 169). Together with Plekhanov, he denies their absolute value. The leaders of the "Centre" or Marsh (Egorov) and of the anti-*Iskra*-ists (Goldblatt) vehemently oppose this view and accuse Plekhanov of "imitating bourgeois tactics" (p. 170). *This is exactly Comrade Axelrod's idea of a connection between orthodoxy and the bourgeois trend*, the only difference being that in Axelrod's case it is vague and general, whereas Goldblatt linked it up with specific issues. Again we ask: does not Comrade Axelrod find that this dispute, too, shows us *palpably*, at our Party Congress, the antagonism between the Jacobins and the Girondists of present-day Social-Democracy? Is it not because he finds himself in the company of the Girondists that Comrade Axelrod raises this outcry against the Jacobins?

Third example: the debate on Paragraph 1 of the Rules. Who is it that defends "*the proletarian trend in our movement*"? Who is it that insists that the worker is not afraid of organisation, that the proletarian has no sympathy for anarchy, that he values the incentive to organise? Who is it that warns us against the bourgeois intelligentsia, permeated through and through with opportunism? *The Jacobins of Social-Democracy*. And who is it that tries to

nuggle radical intellectuals into the Party? Who is it iat is concerned about professors, high-school students, ee lances, the radical youth? *The Girondist Axelrod together with the Girondist Lieber.*

How clumsily Comrade Axelrod defends himself against ie "false accusation of opportunism" that at our Party ongress was openly levelled at the majority of the Emanipation of Labour group! By taking up the hackneyed ernsteinian refrain about Jacobinism, Blanquism, and so n, he defends himself in a manner that only bears out ie accusation! He shouts about the menace of the radical ntellectuals in order to drown out his own speeches at the arty Congress, which were full of concern for these ntellectuals.

These "dreadful words"—Jacobinism and the rest—are xpressive of *opportunism* and nothing else. A Jacobin who holly identifies himself with the *organisation* of the proetariat—a proletariat *conscious* of its class interests—is *revolutionary Social-Democrat.* A Girondist who sighs fter professors and high-school students, who is afraid of he dictatorship of the proletariat, and who yearns for the bsolute value of democratic demands is an *opportunist.* t is only opportunists who can still detect a danger in conpiratorial organisations today, when the idea of confining the political struggle to conspiracy has been refuted housands of times in the press and has long been refuted nd swept aside by the realities of life, and when the carlinal importance of mass political agitation has been elucilated and reiterated to the point of nausea. The real basis f this fear of conspiracy, of Blanquism, is not any feaure to be found in the practical movement (as Bernstein nd Co. have long, and vainly, been trying to make out), ut the Girondist timidity of the bourgeois intellectual, hose mentality so often shows itself among the Social-Democrats of today. Nothing could be more comical than hese laborious efforts of the new *Iskra* to utter a *new word* of warning (uttered hundreds of times before) against he tactics of the French conspirator revolutionaries f the forties and sixties (No. 62, editorial).[42] In the next ssue of *Iskra,* the Girondists of present-day Social-Democracy will no doubt show us a group of French conspirators f the forties for whom the importance of political agitaion among the working masses, the importance of the

labour press as the principal means by which the party influences the class, was an elementary truth they had learned and assimilated long ago.

However, the tendency of the new *Iskra* to repeat the elements and go back to the ABC while pretending to be uttering something new is not fortuitous; it is an inevitable consequence of the situation Axelrod and Martov find themselves in, now that they have landed in the opportunist wing of our Party. There is nothing for it. They have to repeat the opportunist phrases, they have to *go back,* in order to try to find in the *remote past* some sort of justification for their position, which is indefensible from the point of view of the struggle at the Congress and of the shades and divisions in the Party that took shape there. To the Akimovite profundities about Jacobinism and Blanquism, Comrade Axelrod adds Akimovite lamentations to the effect that not only the "Economists", but the "politicians" as well, were "one-sided", excessively "infatuated", and so on and so forth. Reading the high-flown disquisitions on this subject in the new *Iskra,* which conceitedly claims to be above all this one-sidedness and infatuation, one asks in perplexity: whose portrait is it they are painting? where is it that they hear such talk? Who does not know that the division of the Russian Social-Democrats into Economists and politicians has long been obsolete? Go through the files of *Iskra* for the last year or two before the Party Congress, and you will find that the fight against "Economism" subsided and came to an end altogether as far back as 1902; you will find, for example, that in July 1903 (No. 43), "the times of Economism" are spoken of as being "definitely over", Economism is considered "dead and buried", and any infatuations of the politicians are regarded as obvious atavism. Why, then, do the new editors of *Iskra* revert to this dead and buried division? Did we fight the Akimovs at the Congress on account of the mistakes they made in *Rabocheye Dyelo* two years ago? If we had, we should have been sheer idiots. But everyone knows that we did not, that it was not for their old, dead and buried mistakes in *Rabocheye Dyelo* that we fought the Akimovs at the Congress, but for the *new mistakes* they committed in their arguments and their voting at the Congress. It was not by their stand in *Rabocheye Dyelo,* but by their stand at the Congress, that

we judged which mistakes were really a thing of the past and which still lived and called for controversy. By the time of the Congress the old division into Economists and politicians no longer existed; but various opportunist trends continued to exist. They found expression in the debates and voting on a number of issues, and finally led to a new division of the Party into "majority" and "minority". The whole point is that the new editors of *Iskra* are, for obvious reasons, trying to gloss over the connection between this new division and *contemporary* opportunism in our Party, and are, in consequence, compelled to go back from the new division to the old one. Their inability to explain the political origin of the new division (or their desire, in order to prove how accommodating they are, to cast a veil* over its origin) compels them to keep harping on a division that has long been obsolete. Everyone knows that the new division is based on a difference over questions of *organisation*, which began with the controversy over principles of organisation (Paragraph 1 of the Rules) and ended up with a "practice" worthy of anarchists. The old division into Economists and politicians was based mainly on a difference over questions of *tactics*.

In its efforts to justify this retreat from the more complex, truly topical and burning issues of Party life to issues that have long been settled and have now been dug up artificially, the new *Iskra* resorts to an amusing display of profundity for which there can be no other name than tail-ism. Started by Comrade Axelrod, there runs like a crimson thread through all the writing of the new *Iskra* the profound "idea" that content is more important than form, that programme and tactics are more impor-

*See Plekhanov's article on "Economism" in No. 53 of *Iskra*. The subtitle of the article appears to contain a slight misprint. Instead of "Reflections on the Second Party Congress", it should apparently read, "on the *League* Congress", or even "on *Co-optation*". However appropriate concessions to personal claims may be under certain circumstances, it is quite inadmissible (from the Party, not the philistine standpoint) to confuse the issues that are agitating the Party and to substitute for the new mistake of Martov and Axelrod, who have begun to swing from orthodoxy towards opportunism, the old mistake (never recalled today by anyone except the new *Iskra*) of the Martynovs and Akimovs, who perhaps may now be prepared to swing from opportunism towards orthodoxy on many questions of programme and tactics.

tant than organisation, that "the vitality of an organisation is in direct proportion to the volume and value of the content it puts into the movement", that centralism is not an "end in itself", not an "all-saving talisman", etc., etc. Great and profound truths! The programme is indeed more important than tactics, and tactics more important than organisation. The alphabet is more important than etymology, and etymology more important than syntax—but what would we say of people who, after failing in an examination in syntax, went about pluming and priding themselves on being left in a lower class for another year? Comrade Axelrod argued about principles of organisation like an opportunist (Paragraph 1), and behaved inside the organisation like an anarchist (League Congress)—and now he is trying to render Social-Democracy more profound. Sour grapes! What is organisation, properly speaking? Why, it is only a form. What is centralism? After all, it is not a talisman. What is syntax? Why, it is less important than etymology; it is only the form of combining the elements of etymology. . . . "Will not Comrade Alexandrov agree with us," the new editors of *Iskra* triumphantly ask, "when we say that the Congress did much more for the centralisation of Party work by drawing up a Party programme than by adopting Rules, however perfect the latter may seem?" (No. 56, Supplement.) It is to be hoped that this classical utterance will acquire a historic fame no less wide and no less lasting than Comrade Krichevsky's celebrated remark that Social-Democracy, like mankind, always sets itself only such tasks as it can perform. For the new *Iskra*'s piece of profundity is of exactly the same stamp. Why was Comrade Krichevsky's phrase held up to derision? Because he tried to justify the mistake of a section of the Social-Democrats in matters of tactics—their inability to set correct political tasks—by a commonplace which he wanted to palm off as philosophy. In exactly the same way the new *Iskra* tries to justify the mistake of a section of the Social-Democrats in matters of organisation—the intellectualist instability of certain comrades, which has led them to the point of anarchistic phrase-mongering—by the commonplace that the programme is more important than the Rules, that questions of programme are more important than questions of organisa-

tion! What is this but tail-ism? What is it but pluming oneself on having been left in a lower class for another year?

The adoption of a programme contributes more to the centralisation of the work than the adoption of Rules. How this commonplace, palmed off as philosophy, reeks of the mentality of the radical intellectual, who has much more in common with bourgeois decadence than with Social-Democracy! Why, the word centralisation is used in this famous phrase in a sense that is nothing but *symbolical*. If the authors of the phrase are unable or disinclined to think, they might at least have recalled the simple fact that the adoption of a programme together with the Bundists, far from leading to the centralisation of our common work, did not even save us from a split. Unity on questions of programme and tactics is an essential but by no means a sufficient condition for Party unity, for the centralisation of Party work (good God, what elementary things one has to spell out nowadays, when all concepts have been confused!). The latter requires, in addition, unity of organisation, which, in a party that has grown to be anything more than a mere family circle, is inconceivable without formal Rules, without the subordination of the minority to the majority and of the part to the whole. As long as we had no unity on the fundamental questions of programme and tactics, we bluntly admitted that we were living in a period of disunity and separate circles, we bluntly declared that before we could unite, lines of demarcation must be drawn; we did not even talk of the forms of a joint organisation, but exclusively discussed the new (at that time they really were new) problems of fighting opportunism on programme and tactics. At present, as we all agree, this fight has already produced a sufficient degree of unity, as formulated in the Party programme and the Party resolutions on tactics; we had to take the next step, and, by common consent, we did take it, working out the *forms* of a united organisation that would merge all the circles together. But now these forms have been half destroyed and we have been dragged back, dragged back to anarchistic conduct, to anarchistic phrases, to the revival of a circle in place of a Party editorial board. And this step back is being justified on the plea that the alphabet is more helpful to literate speech than a knowledge of syntax!

The philosophy of tail-ism, which flourished three years ago in questions of tactics, is being resurrected today in relation to questions of organisation. Take the following argument of the new editors. "The militant Social-Democratic trend in the Party," says Comrade Alexandrov, "should be maintained not only by an ideological struggle, but by definite forms of organisation." Whereupon the editors edifyingly remark: "Not bad, this juxtaposition of ideological struggle and forms of organisation. The ideological struggle is a process, whereas the forms of organisation are only . . . forms [believe it or not, that is what they say—No. 56, Supplement, p. 4, bottom of col. 1!] designed to clothe a fluid and developing content—the developing practical work of the Party." That is positively in the style of the joke about a cannon-ball being a cannon-ball and a bomb a bomb! The ideological struggle is a process, whereas the forms of organisation are only forms clothing the content! The point at issue is whether our ideological struggle is to have forms *of a higher type* to clothe it, the forms of a party organisation, binding on all, or the forms of the old disunity and the old circles. We have been dragged back from higher to more primitive forms, and this is being justified on the plea that the ideological struggle is a process, whereas forms—are only forms. That is just how Comrade Krichevsky in bygone days tried to drag us back from tactics-as-a-plan to tactics-as-a-process.

Take the new *Iskra*'s pompous talk about the "self-training of the proletariat", directed against those who are supposed to be in danger of missing the content because of the form (No. 58, editorial). Is this not Akimovism No. 2? Akimovism No. 1 justified the backwardness of a section of the Social-Democratic intelligentsia in formulating tactical tasks by talking about the more "profound" content of "the proletarian struggle" and the self-training of the proletariat. Akimovism No. 2 justifies the backwardness of a section of the Social-Democratic intelligentsia in the theory and practice of organisation by equally profound talk about organisation being merely a form and the self-training of the proletariat the important thing. Let me tell you gentlemen who are so solicitous about the younger brother that the proletariat is not afraid of organisation and discipline! The proletariat will do

nothing to have the worthy professors and high-school students who do not want to join an organisation recognised as Party members merely because they work under the control of an organisation. The proletariat is trained for organisation by its whole life, far more radically than many an intellectual prig. Having gained some understanding of our programme and our tactics, the proletariat will not start justifying backwardness in organisation by arguing that the form is less important than the content. It is not the proletariat, but *certain intellectuals* in our Party who lack *self-training* in the spirit of organisation and discipline, in the spirit of hostility and contempt for anarchistic talk. When they say that it is not ripe for organisation, the Akimovs No. 2 libel the proletariat just as the Akimovs No. 1 libelled it when they said that it was not ripe for the political struggle. The proletarian who has become a conscious Social-Democrat and feels himself a member of the Party will reject tail-ism in matters of organisation with the same contempt as he rejected tail-ism in matters of tactics.

Finally, consider the profound wisdom of the new *Iskra*'s "Practical Worker". "Properly understood," he says, "the idea of a 'militant' centralist organisation uniting and centralising the revolutionaries' *activities* [the italics are to make it look more profound] can only materialise naturally if such activities *exist* [both new and clever!]; organisation itself, being a form [mark that!], can only grow *simultaneously* [the italics are the author's, as throughout this quotation] with the growth of the revolutionary work which is its content." (No. 57.) Does not this remind you very much of the character in the folk tale who, on seeing a funeral, cried: "Many happy returns of the day"? I am sure there is not a practical worker (in the genuine sense of the term) in our Party who does not understand that it is precisely the form of our activities (i.e., our organisation) that has long been lagging, and lagging desperately, behind their content, and that only the Simple Simons in the Party could shout to people who are lagging: "Keep in line; don't run ahead!" Compare our Party, let us say, with the Bund. There can be no question but that the *content** of the work of our Party is im-

* I leave quite aside the fact that the *content* of our Party

measurably richer, more varied, broader, and deeper than is the case with the Bund. The scope of our theoretical views is wider, our programme more developed, our influence among the mass of the workers (and not merely among the organised artisans) broader and deeper, our propaganda and agitation more varied; the pulse of the political work of both leaders and rank and file is more lively, the *popular* movements during demonstrations and general strikes more impressive, and our work among the non-proletarian strata more energetic. But the "form"? Compared with the Bund's, the "form" of our work is lagging unpardonably, lagging so that it is an eyesore and brings a blush of shame to the cheeks of anyone who does not merely "pick his teeth" when contemplating the affairs of his Party. The fact that the organisation of our work lags behind its content is our weak point, and it was our weak point long before the Congress, long before the Organising Committee was formed. The lame and undeveloped character of the form makes any serious step in the further development of the content impossible; it causes a shameful stagnation, leads to a waste of energy, to a discrepancy between word and deed. We have all been suffering wretchedly from this discrepancy, yet along come the Axelrods and "Practical Workers" of the new *Iskra* with their profound precept: the form must grow naturally, only simultaneously with the content!

That is where a small mistake on the question of organisation (Paragraph 1) will lead you if you try to *lend profundity* to nonsense and to find philosophical justification for opportunist talk. Marching slowly, in timid zigzags![43]—we have heard this refrain in relation to questions of tactics; we are hearing it again in relation to questions of organisation. *Tail-ism in questions of organisation* is a natural and inevitable product of the mentality of the *anarchistic individualist* when he starts to elevate his anarchistic deviations (which at the outset

---

work was mapped out at the Congress (in the programme, etc.) in the spirit of revolutionary Social-Democracy only *at the cost of a struggle*, a struggle against those very anti-*Iskra*-ists and that very Marsh whose representatives numerically predominate in our "minority". On this question of "content" it would be interesting also to compare, let us say, six issues of the old *Iskra* (Nos. 46-51) with twelve issues of the new *Iskra* (Nos. 52-63). But that will have to wait for some other time.

may have been accidental) to a *system of views*, to special *differences of principle*. At the League Congress we witnessed the beginnings of this anarchism; in the new *Iskra* we are witnessing attempts to elevate it to a system of views. These attempts strikingly confirm what was already said at the Party Congress about the difference between the points of view of the bourgeois intellectual who attaches himself to the Social-Democratic movement and the proletarian who has become conscious of his class interests. For instance, this same "Practical Worker" of the new *Iskra* with whose profundity we are already familiar denounces me for visualising the Party "as an immense factory" headed by a director in the shape of the Central Committee (No. 57, Supplement). "Practical Worker" never guesses that this dreadful word of his immediately betrays the mentality of the bourgeois intellectual unfamiliar with either the practice or the theory of proletarian organisation. For the factory, which seems only a bogey to some, represents that highest form of capitalist co-operation which has united and disciplined the proletariat, taught it to organise, and placed it at the head of all the other sections of the toiling and exploited population. And Marxism, the ideology of the proletariat trained by capitalism, has been and is teaching unstable intellectuals to distinguish between the factory as a means of exploitation (discipline based on fear of starvation) and the factory as a means of organisation (discipline based on collective work united by the conditions of a technically highly developed form of production). The discipline and organisation which come so hard to the bourgeois intellectual are very easily acquired by the proletariat just because of this factory "schooling". Mortal fear of this school and utter failure to understand its importance as an organising factor are characteristic of the ways of thinking which reflect the petty-bourgeois mode of life and which give rise to the species of anarchism that the German Social-Democrats call *Edelanarchismus*, that is, the anarchism of the "noble" gentleman, or aristocratic anarchism, as I would call it. This aristocratic anarchism is particularly characteristic of the Russian nihilist. He thinks of the Party organisation as a monstrous "factory"; he regards the subordination of the part to the whole and of the minority to the majority as

"serfdom" (see Axelrod's articles); division of labour under the direction of a centre evokes from him a tragicomical outcry against transforming people into "cogs and wheels" (to turn editors into contributors being considered a particularly atrocious species of such transformation); mention of the organisational Rules of the Party calls forth a contemptuous grimace and the disdainful remark (intended for the "formalists") that one could very well dispense with Rules altogether.

Incredible as it may seem, it was a didactic remark of just this sort that Comrade Martov addressed to me in *Iskra*, No 58, quoting, for greater weight, my own words in *A Letter to a Comrade*. Well, what is it if not "aristocratic anarchism" and tail-ism to cite examples from the era of disunity, the era of the circles, to *justify* the preservation and glorification of the circle spirit and anarchy in the era of the Party?

Why did we not need Rules before? Because the Party consisted of separate circles without any organisational tie between them. Any individual could pass from one circle to another at his own "sweet will", for he was not faced with any formulated expression of the will of the whole. Disputes within the circles were not settled according to Rules, "*but by struggle and threats to resign*", as I put it in *A Letter to a Comrade*,* summarising the experience of a number of circles in general and of our own editorial circle of six in particular. In the era of the circles, this was natural and inevitable, but it never occurred to anybody to extol it, to regard it as ideal; everyone complained of the disunity, everyone was distressed by it and eager to see the isolated circles fused into a formally constituted party organisation. And now that this fusion has taken place, we are being dragged back and, under the guise of higher organisational views, treated to anarchistic phrase-mongering! To people accustomed to the loose dressing-gown and slippers of the Oblomov[44] circle domesticity, formal Rules seem narrow, restrictive, irksome, mean, and bureaucratic, a bond of serfdom and a fetter on the free "process" of the ideological struggle. Aristocratic anarchism cannot understand that formal Rules are needed precisely in order to re-

---

* See *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 231-52.—*Ed.*

place the narrow circle ties by the broad Party tie. It was unnecessary and impossible to give formal shape to the internal ties of a circle or the ties between circles, for these ties rested on personal friendship or on an instinctive "confidence" for which no reason was given. The Party tie cannot and must not rest on either of these; it must be founded on *formal,* "bureaucratically" worded Rules (bureaucratic from the standpoint of the undisciplined intellectual), strict adherence to which can alone safeguard us from the wilfulness and caprices characteristic of the circles, from the circle wrangling that goes by the name of the free "process" of the ideological struggle.

The editors of the new *Iskra* try to trump Alexandrov with the didactic remark that "confidence is a delicate thing and cannot be hammered into people's hearts and minds" (No. 56, Supplement). The editors do not realise that by this talk about confidence, *naked* confidence, they are once more betraying their aristocratic anarchism and organisational tail-ism. When I was a member of a circle only—whether it was the circle of the six editors or the *Iskra* organisation—I was entitled to justify my refusal, say, to work with X merely on the grounds of lack of confidence, without stating reason or motive. But now that I have become a member of a party, I *have no right* to plead lack of confidence in general, for that would throw open the doors to all the freaks and whims of the old circles; I am *obliged* to give formal reasons for my "confidence" or "lack of confidence", that is, to cite a formally established principle of our programme, tactics or Rules; I must not just declare my "confidence" or "lack of confidence" without giving reasons, but must acknowledge that my decisions—and generally all decisions of any section of the Party—*have to be accounted for* to the whole Party; I am obliged to adhere to a *formally prescribed* procedure when giving expression to my "lack of confidence" or trying to secure the acceptance of the views and wishes that follow from this lack of confidence. From the *circle* view that "confidence" does not have to be accounted for. we have already risen to the *Party* view which demands adherence to a formally prescribed procedure of expressing, accounting for, and *testing* our confidence; but the editors try drag us back, and call their tail-ism new views on organisation!

Listen to the way our so-called Party editors talk about writers' groups that might demand representation on the editorial board. "We shall not get indignant and begin to shout about discipline", we are admonished by these aristocratic anarchists who have always and everywhere looked down on such a thing as discipline. We shall either "arrange the matter" (*sic*!) with the group, if it is sensible, or just laugh at its demands.

Dear me, what a lofty and noble rebuff to vulgar "factory" formalism! But in reality it is the old circle phraseology furbished up a little and served up to the Party by an editorial board which feels that it is not a Party institution, but the survival of an old circle. The intrinsic falsity of this position inevitably leads to the *anarchistic* profundity of elevating the disunity they hypocritically proclaim to be past and gone to a *principle* of Social-Democratic organisation. There is no need for any hierarchy of higher and lower Party bodies and authorities—aristocratic anarchism regards such a hierarchy as the bureaucratic invention of ministries, departments, etc. (see Axelrod's article); there is no need for the part to submit to the whole; there is no need for any "formal bureaucratic" definition of *Party* methods of "arranging matters" or of delimiting differences. Let the old circle wrangling be sanctified by pompous talk about "genuinely Social-Democratic" methods of organisation.

This is where the proletarian who has been through the school of the "factory" can and should teach a lesson to anarchistic individualism. The class-conscious worker has long since emerged from the state of infancy when he used to fight shy of the intellectual as such. The class-conscious worker appreciates the richer store of knowledge and the wider political outlook which he finds among Social-Democratic intellectuals. But as we proceed with the building of a *real* party, the class-conscious worker must learn to distinguish the mentality of the soldier of the proletarian army from the mentality of the bourgeois intellectual who parades anarchistic phrases; he must learn to *insist* that the duties of a Party member be fulfilled not only by the rank and file, but by the "people at the top" as well; he must learn to treat tail-ism in matters of organisation with the same contempt as he used, in days gone by, to treat tail-ism in matters of tactics!

Inseparably connected with Girondism and aristocratic anarchism is the last characteristic feature of the new *Iskra*'s attitude towards matters of organisation, namely, its defence of *autonomism* as against centralism. This is the meaning in principle (if it has any such meaning*) of its outcry against bureaucracy and autocracy, of its regrets about "an undeserved disregard for the non-*Iskra*-ists" (who defended autonomism at the Congress), of its comical howls about a demand for "unquestioning obedience", of its bitter complaints of "Jack-in-office rule", etc., etc. The opportunist wing of any party always defends and justifies all backwardness, whether in programme, tactics, or organisation. The new *Iskra*'s defence of backwardness in organisation (its tail-ism) is closely connected with the defence of *autonomism*. True, autonomism has, generally speaking, been so discredited already by the three years' propaganda work of the old *Iskra* that the new *Iskra* is ashamed, *as yet,* to advocate it openly; it still assures us of its sympathy for centralism, but shows it only by printing the word centralism in italics. Actually, it is enough to apply the slightest touch of criticism to the "principles" of the "genuinely Social-Democratic" (not anarchistic?) quasi-centralism of the new *Iskra* for the autonomist standpoint to be detected at every step. Is it not now clear to all and sundry that on the subject of organisation Axelrod and Martov have swung over to Akimov? Have they not solemnly admitted it themselves in the significant words, "undeserved disregard for the non-*Iskra*-ists"? And what was it but autonomism that Akimov and his friends defended at our Party Congress?

It was autonomism (if not anarchism) that Martov and Axelrod defended at the League Congress when, with amusing zeal, they tried to prove that the part need not submit to the whole, that the part is autonomous in defining its relation to the whole, that the Rules of the League, in which that relation is formulated, are valid in defiance of the will of the Party majority, in defiance of the will of the Party centre. And it is autonomism that Comrade Martov is now openly defending in the columns of the new *Iskra* (No. 60) in the matter of the right of the Cen-

---

* I leave aside here, as in this section generally, the "co-optational" meaning of this outcry.

tral Committee to appoint members to the local committees. I shall not speak of the puerile sophistries which Comrade Martov used to defend autonomism at the League Congress, and is still using in the new *Iskra**—the important thing here is to note the undoubted tendency to *defend autonomism against centralism,* which is a fundamental characteristic of opportunism in matters of organisation.

Perhaps the only attempt to *analyse* the concept bureaucracy is the distinction drawn in the new *Iskra* (No. 53) between the "formal *democratic* principle" (author's italics) and the "formal *bureaucratic* principle". This distinction (which, unfortunately, was no more developed or explained than the reference to the non-*Iskra*-ists) contains a grain of truth. Bureaucracy *versus* democracy is in fact centralism *versus* autonomism; it is the organisational principle of revolutionary Social-Democracy as opposed to the organisational principle of opportunist Social-Democracy. The latter strives to proceed from the bottom upward, and, therefore, wherever possible and as far as possible, upholds autonomism and "democracy", carried (by the overzealous) to the point of anarchism. The former strives to proceed from the top downward, and upholds an extension of the rights and powers of the centre in relation to the parts. In the period of disunity and separate circles, this top from which revolutionary Social-Democracy strove to proceed organisationally was inevitably one of the circles, the one enjoying most influence by virtue of its activity and its revolutionary consistency (in our case, the *Iskra* organisation). In the period of the restoration of actual Party unity and dissolution of the obsolete circles in this unity, this top is inevitably the *Party Congress,* as the supreme organ of the Party; the Congress as far as possible includes representatives of all the active organisations, and, by appointing the central institutions (often with a membership which satisfies the advanced elements of the Party more than the backward and is more

---

* In enumerating various paragraphs of the Rules, Comrade Martov *omitted* the one which deals with the relation of the whole to the part: the Central Committee "allocates the Party forces" (Paragraph 6). Can one allocate forces without transferring people from one committee to another? It is positively awkward to have to dwell on such elementary things.

to the taste of its revolutionary than its opportunist wing), makes them the top until the next Congress. Such, at any rate, is the case among the Social-Democratic Europeans, although little by little this custom, so abhorrent in principle to anarchists, is beginning to spread—not without difficulty and not without conflicts and squabbles—to the Social-Democratic Asiatics.

It is highly interesting to note that these fundamental characteristics of opportunism in matters of organisation (autonomism, aristocratic or intellectualist anarchism, tailism, and Girondism) are, *mutatis mutandis* (with appropriate modifications), to be observed in all the Social-Democratic parties in the world, wherever there is a division into a revolutionary and an opportunist wing (and where is there not?). Only quite recently this was very strikingly revealed in the German Social-Democratic Party, when its defeat at the elections in the 20th electoral division of Saxony (known as the Göhre incident*) brought the question of the *principles* of party organisation to the fore. That this incident should have become an issue of principle was largely due to the zeal of the German opportunists. Göhre (an ex-parson, author of the fairly well-known book *Drei Monate Fabrikarbeiter,*** and one of the "heroes" of the Dresden Congress) is himself an extreme opportunist, and the *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (Socialist Monthly),[46] the organ of the consistent German opportunists, at once "took up the cudgels" on his behalf.

Opportunism in programme is naturally connected with opportunism in tactics and opportunism in organisation. The exposition of the "new" point of view was undertaken by Comrade Wolfgang Heine. To give the reader some idea of the political complexion of this typical intellectual, who on joining the Social-Democratic movement brought with him opportunist habits of thought, it

---

*Göhre was returned to the Reichstag on June 16, 1903, from the 15th division of Saxony, but after the Dresden Congress[45] he resigned his seat. The electorate of the 20th division, which had fallen vacant on the death of Rosenow, wanted to put forward Göhre as candidate. The Central Party Executive and the Regional Party Executive for Saxony opposed this, and while they had no formal right to forbid Göhre's nomination, they succeeded in getting him to decline. The Social-Democrats were defeated at the polls.

** *Three Months as a Factory Worker.—Ed.*

is enough to say that Comrade Wolfgang Heine is something less than a German Comrade Akimov and something more than a German Comrade Egorov.

Comrade Wolfgang Heine took the field in the *Sozialistische Monatshefte* with no less pomp than Comrade Axelrod in the new *Iskra*. The very title of his article is priceless: "Democratic Observations on the Göhre Incident" *(Sozialistische Monatshefte,* No 4, April). The contents are no less thunderous. Comrade W. Heine rises up in arms against "encroachments on the autonomy of the constituency", champions "the democratic principle", and protests against the interference of an "appointed authority" (i.e., the Central Party Executive) in the free election of deputies by the people. The point at issue, Comrade W. Heine admonishes us, is not a random incident, but a general "*tendency towards bureaucracy and centralism in the Party*", a tendency, he says, which was to be observed before, but which is now becoming particularly dangerous. It must be "recognised as a principle that the local institutions of the Party are the vehicles of Party life" (a plagiarism on Comrade Martov's pamphlet *Once More in the Minority).* We must not "accustom ourselves to having all important political decisions come from one centre", and must warn the Party against "a doctrinaire policy which loses contact with life" (borrowed from Comrade Martov's speech at the Party Congress to the effect that "life will assert itself"). Rendering his argument more profound, Comrade W. Heine says: ". . .If we go down to the roots of the matter and leave aside personal conflicts, which here, as everywhere, have played no small part, this bitterness against the *revisionists* [the italics are the author's and evidently hint at a distinction between fighting revisionism and fighting revisionists] will be found to be mainly expressive of the distrust of the Party officialdom for '*outsiders*'. [W. Heine had apparently not yet read the pamphlet about combating the state of siege, and therefore resorted to an Anglicism—*Outsidertum*], the distrust of tradition for the unusual, of the impersonal institution for everything individual [see Axelrod's resolution at the League Congress on the suppression of individual initiative]—in short, of that tendency which we have defined above as a tendency towards bureaucracy and centralism in the Party."

The idea of "discipline" inspires Comrade W. Heine with a no less noble disgust than Comrade Axelrod.... "The revisionists," he writes, "have been accused of lack of discipline for having written for the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, an organ whose Social-Democratic character has even been denied because it is not *controlled by the Party*. This very attempt to narrow down the concept 'Social-Democratic', this insistence on *discipline* in the sphere of ideological production, where absolute freedom should prevail [remember: the ideological struggle is a process whereas the forms of organisation are only forms], demonstrates the tendency towards bureaucracy and the suppression of individuality." And W. Heine goes on and on, fulminating against this detestable tendency to create "*one* big all-embracing organisation, as centralised as possible, *one* set of tactics, and *one* theory", against the demand for "implicit obedience", "blind submission", against "oversimplified centralism", etc., etc., literally "*à la* Axelrod".

The controversy started by W. Heine spread, and as there were no squabbles about co-optation in the German Party to obscure the issue, and as the German Akimovs display their complexion not only at congresses, but all the time, in a periodical of their own, the argument soon boiled down to an analysis of the principles of the orthodox and revisionist trends on the question of organisation. Karl Kautsky came forward (in the *Neue Zeit,* 1904, No. 28, in the article "*Wahlkreis und Partei*"—"Constituency and Party") as one of the spokesmen of the revolutionary trend (which, exactly as in our Party, was of course accused of "dictatorship", "inquisitorial" tendencies, and other dreadful things). W. Heine's article, he says, "expresses the line of thought of the whole revisionist trend". Not only in Germany, but in France and Italy as well, the opportunists are all staunch supporters of autonomism, of a slackening of Party discipline, of reducing it to naught; everywhere their tendencies lead to *disorganisation* and to perverting "the democratic principle" into *anarchism.* "Democracy does not mean absence of authority," Karl Kautsky informs the opportunists on the subject of organisation, "democracy does not mean anarchy; it means the rule of the masses over their representatives, in distinction to other forms of rule, where the supposed

servants of the people are in reality their masters." Kautsky traces at length the disruptive role played by opportunist autonomism in various countries; he shows that it is precisely the influx of "*a great number of bourgeois elements*"* into the Social-Democratic movement that is strengthening opportunism, autonomism, and the tendency to violate discipline; and once more he reminds us that "organisation is the weapon that will emancipate the proletariat", that "organisation is the characteristic weapon of the proletariat in the class struggle".

In Germany, where opportunism is weaker than in France or Italy, "autonomist tendencies have so far led only to more or less passionate declamations against dictators and grand inquisitors, against excommunication** and heresy-hunting, and to endless cavilling and squabbling, which would only result in endless strife if replied to by the other side".

It is not surprising that in Russia, where opportunism in the Party is even weaker than in Germany, autonomist tendencies should have produced fewer ideas and more "passionate declamations" and squabbling.

It is not surprising that Kautsky arrives at the following conclusion: "There is perhaps no other question on which revisionism in all countries, despite its multiplicity of form and hue, is so alike as on the question of organisation." Kautsky, too, defines the basic tendencies of orthodoxy and revisionism in this sphere with the help of the "dreadful word": bureaucracy *versus* democracy. We are told, he says, that to give the Party leadership the right to influence the selection of candidates (for parliament) by the constituencies is "a shameful encroachment on the democratic principle, which demands that all political activity proceed from the bottom upward, by the independent activity of the masses, and not from the top downward, in a bureaucratic way.... But if there is any democratic principle, it is that the majority must have

---

*Kautsky mentions *Jaurès* as an example. The more these people deviated towards opportunism, the more "they were bound to consider Party discipline an impermissible constraint on their free personality".

** *Bannstrahl*: excommunication. This is the German equivalent of the Russian "state of siege" and "emergency laws". It is the "dreadful word" of the German opportunists.

predominance over the minority, and not the other way round. . . ." The election of a member of parliament by any constituency is an important matter for the Party as a whole, which should influence the nomination of candidates, if only through its representatives (*Vertrauensmänner*). "Whoever considers this too bureaucratic or centralistic let him suggest that candidates be nominated by the direct vote of the Party membership at large [*sämtliche Parteigenossen*]. If he thinks this is not practicable, he must not complain of a lack of democracy when this function, like many others that concern the Party as a whole, is exercised by one or several Party bodies." It has long been "common law" in the German Party for constituencies to "come to a friendly understanding" with the Party leadership about the choice of candidates. "But the Party has grown too big for this tacit common law to suffice any longer. Common law ceases to be law when it ceases to be accepted as a matter of course, when its stipulations, and even its very existence, are called in question. Then it becomes necessary to formulate the law specifically, to codify it"... to go over to more "precise statutory definition* *[statutarische Festlegung]* and, accordingly, greater strictness *[grössere Straffheit]* of organisation".

Thus you have, in a different environment, the same struggle between the opportunist and the revolutionary wing of the Party on the question of organisation, the same conflict between autonomism and centralism, between democracy and "bureaucracy", between the tendency to relax and the tendency to tighten organisation and discipline, between the mentality of the unstable intellectual and that of the staunch proletarian, between intellectualist individualism and proletarian solidarity. What, one asks, was the attitude to this conflict of *bourgeois democracy*—not the bourgeois democracy which prankish history has only promised in private to show to Comrade

---

*It is highly instructive to compare these remarks of Kautsky's about the replacement of a tacitly recognised common law by a formally defined statutory law with that whole "change-over" which our Party in general, and the editorial board in particular, have been undergoing since the Party Congress. Cf. the speech of V. I. Zasulich (at the League Congress, p. 66 et seq.), who does not seem to realise the full significance of this change-over.

Axelrod some day, but the real and actual bourgeois democracy which in Germany has spokesmen no less shrewd and observant than our own gentlemen of *Osvobozhdenye*? German bourgeois democracy at once reacted to the new controversy, and—like Russian bourgeois democracy, like bourgeois democracy everywhere and always—sided solidly with the opportunist wing of the Social-Democratic Party. The *Frankfurter Zeitung*,[47] leading organ of the German stock exchange, published a thunderous editorial (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, April 7, 1904, No. 97, evening edition) which shows that shameless plagiarising of Axelrod is becoming a veritable disease with the German press. The stern democrats of the Frankfort stock exchange lash out furiously at the "absolutism" in the Social-Democratic Party, at the "party dictatorship", at the "autocratic rule of the Party authorities", at the "interdicts" which are intended "concurrently to chastise revisionism as a whole" (recall the "false accusation of opportunism"), at the insistence on "blind obedience", "deadening discipline", "servile subordination", and the transforming of Party members into "political corpses" (that is a good bit stronger than cogs and wheels!). "All distinctiveness of personality", the knights of the stock exchange indignantly exclaim at the sight of the undemocratic regime among the Social-Democrats, "all individuality is to be held in opprobrium, because it is feared that they might lead to the French order of things, to Jaurèsism and Millerandism, as was stated in so many words by Sindermann, who made the report on the subject" at the Party Congress of the Saxon Social-Democrats.

And so, insofar as the new catchwords of the new *Iskra* on organisation contain any principles at all, there can be no doubt that they are opportunist principles. This conclusion is confirmed both by the whole analysis of our Party Congress, which divided into a revolutionary and an opportunist wing, and by the example of *all* European Social-Democratic parties, where opportunism in organisation finds expression in the same tendencies, in the same accusations, and very often in the same catchwords. Of course, the national peculiarities of the various parties and

the different political conditions in different countries leave their impress and make German opportunism quite dissimilar from French, French opportunism from Italian, and Italian opportunism from Russian. But the similarity of the fundamental division of all these parties into a revolutionary and an opportunist wing, the similarity of the line of thought and the tendencies of opportunism in organisation stand out clearly in spite of all this difference of conditions.* With large numbers of radical intellectuals in the ranks of our Marxists and our Social-Democrats, the opportunism which their mentality produces has been, and is, bound to exist, in the most varied spheres and in the most varied forms. We fought opportunism on the fundamental problems of our world conception, on the questions of our programme, and the complete divergence of aims inevitably led to an irrevocable break between the Social-Democrats and the liberals who had corrupted our legal Marxism. We fought opportunism on tactical issues, and our divergence with Comrades Krichevsky and Akimov on these less important issues was naturally only temporary, and was not accompanied by the formation of different parties. We must now vanquish the opportunism of Martov and Axelrod on questions of organisation, which are, of course, less fundamental than questions of tactics, let alone of programme, but which have now come to the forefront in our Party life.

When we speak of fighting opportunism, we must never forget a characteristic feature of present-day opportunism in every sphere, namely, its vagueness, amorphousness, elusiveness. An opportunist, by his very nature, will

---

* No one will doubt today that the old division of the Russian Social-Democrats into Economists and politicians on questions of tactics was similar to the division of the whole international Social-Democratic movement into opportunists and revolutionaries, although the difference between Comrades Martynov and Akimov, on the one hand, and Comrades von Vollmar and von Elm or Jaurès and Millerand, on the other, is very great. Nor can there be any doubt about the similarity of the main divisions on questions of organisation, in spite of the enormous difference between the conditions of politically unenfranchised and politically free countries. It is extremely characteristic that the highly principled editors of the new *Iskra*, while briefly touching on the controversy between Kautsky and Heine (No. 64), timidly *evaded* discussing the trends of *principle* manifested on questions of organisation by opportunism and orthodoxy *generally*.

always evade taking a clear and decisive stand, he will always seek a middle course, he will always wriggle like a snake between two mutually exclusive points of view and try to "agree" with both and reduce his differences of opinion to petty amendments, doubts, innocent and pious suggestions, and so on and so forth. Comrade Eduard Bernstein, an opportunist in questions of programme, "agrees" with the revolutionary programme of his party, and although he would no doubt like to have it "radically revised", he considers this untimely, inexpedient, not so important as the elucidation of "general principles" of "criticism" (which mainly consist in uncritically borrowing principles and catchwords from bourgeois democracy). Comrade von Vollmar, an opportunist in questions of tactics, also agrees with the old tactics of revolutionary Social-Democracy and also confines himself mostly to declamations, petty amendments, and sneers rather than openly advocates any definite "ministerial"[48] tactics. Comrades Martov and Axelrod, opportunists in questions of organisation, have also failed so far to produce, though directly challenged to do so, any definite statement of principles that could be "fixed by statute"; they too would like, they most certainly would like, a "radical revision" of our Rules of Organisation (*Iskra,* No. 58, p. 2, col. 3), but they would prefer to devote themselves first to "general problems of organisation" (for a really radical revision of our Rules, which, in spite of Paragraph 1, are centralist Rules, would inevitably lead, if carried out in the spirit of the new *Iskra,* to autonomism; and Comrade Martov, of course, does not like to admit even to himself that he tends *in principle* towards autonomism). Their "principles" of organisation therefore display all the colours of the rainbow. The predominant item consists of innocent passionate declamations against autocracy and bureaucracy, against blind obedience and cogs and wheels—declamations so innocent that it is still very difficult to discern in them what is really concerned with principle and what is really concerned with co-optation. But as it goes on, the thing gets worse: attempts to analyse and precisely define this detestable "bureaucracy" inevitably lead to autonomism; attempts to "lend profundity" to their stand and vindicate it inevitably lead to justifying backwardness, to tail-ism, to Girondist phrase-mongering. At last there

emerges the principle of *anarchism*, as the sole really definite principle, which for that reason stands out in practice in particular relief (practice is always in advance of theory). Sneering at discipline—autonomism—anarchism—there you have the ladder which our opportunism in matters of organisation now climbs and now descends, skipping from rung to rung and skilfully dodging any definite statement of its principles.* Exactly the same stages are displayed by opportunism in matters of programme and tactics: sneering at "orthodoxy", narrowness, and immobility—revisionist "criticism" and ministerialism—bourgeois democracy.

There is a close psychological connection between this hatred of discipline and that incessant nagging not of *injury* which is to be detected in all writings of all opportunists today in general, and of our minority in particular. They are being persecuted, hounded, ejected, besieged, and bullied. There is far more psychological and political truth in these catchwords than was probably suspected even by the author of the pleasant and witty joke

* Those who recall the debate on Paragraph 1 will now clearly see that the mistake committed by Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod over Paragraph 1 had *inevitably* to lead, when developed and deepened, to opportunism in matters of organisation. Comrade Martov's fundamental idea—self-enrolment in the Party—was this same false "democracy", the idea of building the Party from the bottom upward. My idea, on the other hand, was "bureaucratic" in the sense that the Party was to be built from the top downward, from the Party Congress to the individual Party organisations. The mentality of the bourgeois intellectual, anarchistic phrase-mongering, and opportunist, tail-ist profundity were all already displayed in the debate on Paragraph 1. Comrade Martov says in his *State of Siege* (p. 20) that "new ideas are beginning to be worked out" by the new *Iskra*. That is true in the sense that he and Axelrod are really pushing ideas in a new direction, beginning with Paragraph 1. The only trouble is that this direction is an opportunist one. The more they "work" in *this* direction, and the more this work is cleared of squabbling over co-optation, the deeper will they sink in the mire. Comrade Plekhanov already perceived this clearly at the Party Congress, and in his article "What Should Not Be Done" warned them once again: I am prepared, he as much as said, even to co-opt you, only don't continue along this road which can only lead to opportunism and anarchism. Martov and Axelrod would not follow this good advice: What? Not continue along this road? Agree with Lenin that the co-optation clamour is nothing but squabbling? Never! We'll show him that we are men of principle!—And they have. They have clearly shown everyone that if they have any new principles at all, they are opportunist principles.

about bullies and bullied.[49] For you have only to take the minutes of our Party Congress to see that the minority are all those who suffer from a sense of injury, all those who at one time or another and for one reason or another were offended by the revolutionary Social-Democrats. There are the Bundists and the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists, whom we "offended" so badly that they withdrew from the Congress; there are the *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ists, who were mortally offended by the slaughter of organisations in general and of their own in particular; there is Comrade Makhov, who had to put up with offence every time he took the floor (for every time he did, he invariably made a fool of himself); and lastly, there are Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod, who were offended by the "false accusation of opportunism" in connection with Paragraph 1 of the Rules and by their defeat in the elections. All these mortal offences were not the accidental outcome of impermissible witticisms, rude behaviour, frenzied controversy, slamming of doors, and shaking of fists, as so many philistines imagine to this day, but the inevitable political outcome of the whole three years' ideological work of *Iskra*. If in the course of these three years we were not just wagging our tongues, but giving expression to convictions which were to be translated into deeds, we could not but fight the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Marsh" at the Congress. And when, together with Comrade Martov, who had fought in the front line with visor up, we had offended such heaps of people, we had only to offend Comrade Axelrod and Comrade Martov ever such a little bit for the cup to overflow. Quantity was transformed into quality. The negation was negated. All the offended forgot their mutual scores, fell weeping into each other's arms, and raised the banner of "revolt against Leninism".*

A revolt is a splendid thing when it is the advanced elements who revolt against the reactionary elements. When the revolutionary wing revolts against the opportunist wing, it is a good thing. When the opportunist wing revolts against the revolutionary wing, it is a bad business.

---

* This amazing expression is Comrade Martov's (*State of Siege*, p. 68). Comrade Martov waited until he was five to one before raising the "revolt" against me alone. Comrade Martov argues very unskilfully: he wants to destroy his opponent by paying him the highest compliments.

Comrade Plekhanov is compelled to take part in this bad business in the capacity of a prisoner of war, so to speak. He tries to "vent his spleen" by fishing out isolated awkward phrases by the author of some resolution in favour of the "majority", and exclaiming: "Poor Comrade Lenin! A fine lot his orthodox supporters are!" (*Iskra*, No. 63, Supplement.)

Well, Comrade Plekhanov, all I can say is that if I am poor, the editors of the new *Iskra* are downright paupers. However poor I may be, I have not yet reached such utter destitution as to have to shut my eyes to the Party Congress and hunt for material for the exercise of my wit in the resolutions of committeemen. However poor I may be, I am a thousand times better off than those whose supporters do not utter an awkward phrase inadvertently, but on every issue—whether of organisation, tactics, or programme—adhere stubbornly and persistently to principles which are the very opposite of the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy. However poor I may be, I have not yet reached the stage of having to *conceal from the public* the praises lavished on me by such supporters. And that is what the editors of the new *Iskra* have to do.

Reader, do you know what the Voronezh Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party stands for? If not, read the minutes of the Party Congress. You will learn from them that the line of that committee is wholly expressed by Comrade Akimov and Comrade Brouckère, who at the Congress fought the revolutionary wing of the Party all along the line, and who scores of times were ranked as opportunists by everybody, from Comrade Plekhanov to Comrade Popov. Well, this Voronezh Committee, in its January leaflet (No. 12, January 1904), makes the following statement:

"A great and important event in the life of our steadily growing Party took place last year: the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., a congress of the representatives of its organisations. Convening a Party congress is a very complicated matter, and, under the prevailing monarchical regime, a very dangerous and difficult one. It is therefore not surprising that it was carried out *in a far from perfect way*, and that the Congress itself, although it passed off without mishap, did not live up to all the Party's expectations. The comrades whom the Conference of 1902 commissioned to convene the Congress were arrested, and *the Congress was arranged by persons who represented only one of the trends in Russian Social-Democracy, viz., the 'Iskra'-ists. Many* organisations of Social-Democrats who

did not happen to be *Iskra*-ists were not invited to take part in the work of the Congress; *partly for this reason* the task of drawing up *a programme and Rules* for the Party was carried out by the Congress in an *extremely imperfect manner*; the delegates themselves admit that there are important flaws in the Rules 'which may lead to dangerous misunderstandings'. The *Iskra*-ists themselves split at the Congress, and many prominent members of our R.S.D.L.P. who formerly appeared to be in full agreement with the *Iskra* programme of action have come to see that many of its views, advocated *mainly by Lenin and Plekhanov*, are impracticable. Although these last gained the upper hand at the Congress, the pulse of real life and the requirements of the practical work, in which all the non-*Iskra*-ists are taking part, are quickly correcting the mistakes of the theoreticians and have, since the Congress, already introduced important modifications. *'Iskra' has changed greatly and promises* to pay careful heed to the demands of all workers in the Social-Democratic movement generally. Thus, although *the results of the Congress will have to be revised* at the next Congress, and, as is obvious to the delegates themselves, are unsatisfactory *and therefore cannot be accepted by the Party as unimpeachable decisions*, the Congress clarified the situation in the Party, provided much material for the further theoretical and organising activity of the Party, and was an experience of immense instructive value for the work of the Party as a whole. The decisions of the Congress and the Rules it drew up will be *taken into account* by all the organisations, but many will *refrain from being guided by them exclusively, in view of* their manifest imperfections.

"Fully realising the importance of the work of the Party as a whole, the Voronezh Committee actively *responded* in all matters concerning the organisation of the Congress. It fully appreciates the importance of what took place at the Congress and *welcomes the change undergone by 'Iskra'*, which has become the Central Organ (chief organ).

Although the state of affairs in the Party and the Central Committee does not satisfy us *as yet*, we are confident that by joint efforts the difficult work of organising the Party will be perfected. In view of false rumours, the Voronezh Committee informs the comrades that there is no question of the Voronezh Committee leaving the Party. The Voronezh Committee perfectly realises what a dangerous precedent would be created by the withdrawal of a workers' organisation like the Voronezh Committee from the R.S.D.L.P., *what a reproach this would be to the Party*, and how disadvantageous it would be to workers' organisations which might follow this example. We must not cause new splits, but persistently strive to unite all class-conscious workers and socialists in one party. Besides, the Second Congress was not a constituent congress, but only a regular one. Expulsion from the Party can only

be by decision of a Party court, and no organisation, not even the Central Committee, has the right to expel any Social-Democratic organisation from the Party. Furthermore, under Paragraph 8 of the Rules adopted by the Second Congress every organisation is autonomous in its local affairs, and *the Voronezh Committee is accordingly fully entitled to put its views on organisation into practice and to advocate them in the Party.*"

The editors of the new *Iskra,* in quoting this leaflet in No. 61, reprinted the second half of this tirade, which we give here in large type; as for the first half, here printed in small type, the editors *preferred to omit it.*

They were ashamed.

r) A Few Words on Dialectics. Two Revolutions

A general glance at the development of our Party crisis will readily show that in the main, with minor exceptions, the composition of the two contending sides remained unchanged throughout. It was a struggle between the revolutionary wing and the opportunist wing in our Party. But this struggle passed through the most varied stages, and anyone who wants to find his bearings in the vast amount of literature already accumulated, the mass of fragmentary evidence, passages torn from their context, isolated accusations, and so on and so forth, must thoroughly familiarise himself with the peculiarities of each of these stages.

Let us enumerate the principal and clearly distinct stages: 1) The controversy over Paragraph 1 of the Rules. A purely ideological struggle over the basic principles of organisation. Plekhanov and I are in the minority. Martov and Axelrod propose an opportunist formulation and find themselves in the arms of the opportunists. 2) The split in the *Iskra* organisation over the lists of candidates for the Central Committee: Fomin or Vasilyev in a committee of five, Trotsky or Travinsky in a committee of three. Plekhanov and I gain the majority (nine to seven), partly because of the very fact that we were in the minority on Paragraph 1. Martov's coalition with the opportunists confirmed my worst fears over the Organising Committee in-

cident. 3) Continuation of the controversy over details of the Rules. Martov is again saved by the opportunists. We are again in the minority and fight for the rights of the minority on the central bodies. 4) The seven extreme opportunists withdraw from the Congress. We become the majority and defeat the coalition (the *Iskra*-ist minority, the "Marsh", and the anti-*Iskra*-ists) in the elections. Martov and Popov decline to accept seats in our trios. 5) The post-Congress squabble over co-optation. An orgy of anarchistic behaviour and anarchistic phrase-mongering. The least stable and steadfast elements among the "minority" gain the upper hand. 6) To avert a split, Plekhanov adopts the policy of "killing with kindness". The "minority" occupy the editorial board of the Central Organ and the Council and attack the Central Committee with all their might. The squabble continues to pervade everything . 7) First attack on the Central Committee repulsed. The squabble seems to be subsiding somewhat. It becomes possible to discuss in comparative calm two purely ideological questions which profoundly agitate the Party: a) what is the political significance and explanation of the division of our Party into "majority" and "minority" which took shape at the Second Congress and superseded all earlier divisions? b) what is the significance in principle of the new *Iskra*'s new position on the question of organisation?

In each of these stages the circumstances of the struggle and the immediate object of the attack are materially different; each stage is, as it were, a separate battle in one general military campaign. Our struggle cannot be understood at all unless the concrete circumstances of each battle are studied. But once that is done, we see clearly that development does indeed proceed dialectically, by way of contradictions: the minority becomes the majority, and the majority becomes the minority; each side passes from the defensive to the offensive, and from the offensive to the defensive; the starting-point of ideological struggle (Paragraph 1) is "negated" and gives place to an all-pervading squabble*; but then begins "the negation of the negation", and, having just about managed

* The difficult problem of drawing a line between squabbling and differences of principle now solves itself: all that relates to co-optation is squabbling; all that relates to analysis of the struggle at the Con-

to "rub along" with our god-given wife on different central bodies, we return to the starting-point, the purely ideological struggle; but by now this "thesis" has been enriched by all the results of the "antithesis" and has become a higher synthesis, in which the isolated, random error over Paragraph 1 has grown into a quasi-system of opportunist views on matters of organisation, and in which the connection between this fact and the basic division of our Party into a revolutionary and an opportunist wing becomes increasingly apparent to all. In a word, not only do oats grow according to Hegel, but the Russian Social-Democrats war among themselves according to Hegel.

But the great Hegelian dialectics which Marxism made its own, having first turned it right side up, must never be confused with the vulgar trick of justifying the zigzags of politicians who swing over from the revolutionary to the opportunist wing of the Party, with the vulgar habit of lumping together particular statements, and particular developmental factors, belonging to different stages of a single process. Genuine dialectics does not justify the errors of individuals, but studies the inevitable turns, proving that they were inevitable by a detailed study of the process of development in all its concreteness. One of the basic principles of dialectics is that there is no such thing as abstract truth, truth is always concrete. . . . And, one thing more, the great Hegelian dialectics should never be confused with that vulgar worldly wisdom so well expressed by the Italian saying: *mettere la coda dove non va il capo* (sticking in the tail where the head will not go through).

The outcome of the dialectical development of our Party struggle has been two revolutions. The Party Congress was a real revolution, as Comrade Martov justly remarked in his *Once More in the Minority*. The wits of the minority are also right when they say: "The world moves through revolutions; well, we have made a revolution!" They did indeed make a revolution after the Congress; and it is true, too, that generally speaking the world does move through revolutions. But the concrete significance of each concrete revolution is not defined by

gress, to the controversy over Paragraph 1 and the swing towards opportunism and anarchism is a difference of principle.

this general aphorism; there are revolutions which are more like reaction, to paraphrase the unforgettable expression of the unforgettable Comrade Makhov. We must know whether it was the revolutionary or the opportunist wing of the Party that was the actual force that made the revolution, must know whether it was revolutionary or opportunist principles that inspired the fighters, before we can determine whether a particular concrete revolution moved the "world" (our Party) forward or backward.

Our Party Congress was unique and unprecedented in the entire history of the Russian revolutionary movement. For the first time a secret revolutionary party succeeded in emerging from the darkness of underground life into broad daylight, showing everyone the whole course and outcome of our internal Party struggle, the whole character of our Party and of each of its more or less noticeable components in matters of programme, tactics, and organisation. For the first time we succeeded in throwing off the traditions of circle looseness and revolutionary philistinism, in bringing together dozens of very different groups, many of which had been fiercely warring among themselves and had been linked solely by the force of an idea, and which were now prepared (in principle, that is) to sacrifice all their group aloofness and group independence for the sake of the great whole which we were for the first time actually creating—the *Party*. But in politics sacrifices are not obtained gratis, they have to be won in battle. The battle over the slaughter of organisations necessarily proved terribly fierce. The fresh breeze of free and open struggle blew into a gale. The gale swept away—and a very good thing that it did!—each and every remnant of all circle interests, sentiments, and traditions without exception, and for the first time created genuinely Party institutions.

But it is one thing to call oneself something, and another to be it. It is one thing to sacrifice the circle system in principle for the sake of the Party, and another to renounce one's own circle. The fresh breeze proved tôo fresh as yet for people used to musty philistinism. "The Party was unable to stand the strain of its first congress," as Comrade Martov rightly put it (inadvertently) in his *Once More in the Minority*. The sense of injury over the

slaughter of organisations was too strong. The furious gale raised all the mud from the bottom of our Party stream; and the mud took its revenge. The old hidebound circle spirit overpowered the still young party spirit. The opportunist wing of the Party, routed though it had been, got the better—temporarily, of course—of the revolutionary wing, having been reinforced by Akimov's accidental gain.

The result is the new *Iskra*, which is compelled to develop and deepen the error its editors committed at the Party Congress. The old *Iskra* taught the truths of revolutionary struggle. The new *Iskra* teaches the worldly wisdom of yielding and getting on with everyone. The old *Iskra* was the organ of militant orthodoxy. The new *Iskra* treats us to a recrudescence of opportunism—chiefly on questions of organisation. The old *Iskra* earned the honour of being detested by the opportunists, both Russian and West-European. The new *Iskra* has "grown wise" and will soon cease to be ashamed of the praises lavished on it by the extreme opportunists. The old *Iskra* marched unswervingly towards its goal, and there was no discrepancy between its word and its deed. The inherent falsity of the new *Iskra*'s position inevitably leads—independently even of anyone's will or intention—to political hypocrisy. It inveighs against the circle spirit in order to conceal the victory of the circle spirit over the party spirit. It hypocritically condemns splits, as if one can imagine any way of avoiding splits in any at all organised party except by the subordination of the minority to the majority. It says that heed must be paid to revolutionary public opinion, yet, while concealing the praises of the Akimovs, indulges in petty scandal-mongering about the committees of the revolutionary wing of the Party.* How shameful! How they have disgraced our old *Iskra*!

One step forward, two steps back. . . . It happens in the lives of individuals, and it happens in the history of nations and in the development of parties. It would be the most criminal cowardice to doubt even for a moment the inevitable and complete triumph of the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy, of proletarian organisa-

* A stereotyped form has even been worked out for this charming pastime: our special correspondent X informs us that Committee Y of the majority has behaved badly to Comrade Z of the minority.

tion and Party discipline. We have already won a great deal, and we must go on fighting, undismayed by reverses, fighting steadfastly, scorning the philistine methods of circle wrangling, doing our very utmost to preserve the hard-won single Party tie linking all Russian Social-Democrats, and striving by dint of persistent and systematic work to give all Party members, and the workers in particular, a full and conscious understanding of the duties of Party members, of the struggle at the Second Party Congress, of all the causes and all the stages of our divergence, and of the utter disastrousness of opportunism, which, in the sphere of organisation as in the sphere of our programme and our tactics, helplessly surrenders to the bourgeois psychology, uncritically adopts the point of view of bourgeois democracy, and blunts the weapon of the class struggle of the proletariat.

In its struggle for power the proletariat has no other weapon but organisation. Disunited by the rule of anarchic competition in the bourgeois world, ground down by forced labour for capital, constantly thrust back to the "lower depths" of utter destitution, savagery, and degeneration, the proletariat can, and inevitably will, become an invincible force only through its ideological unification on the principles of Marxism being reinforced by the material unity of organisation, which welds millions of toilers into an army of the working class. Neither the senile rule of the Russian autocracy nor the senescent rule of international capital will be able to withstand this army. It will more and more firmly close its ranks, in spite of all zigzags and backward steps, in spite of the opportunist phrase-mongering of the Girondists of present-day Social-Democracy, in spite of the self-satisfied exaltation of the retrograde circle spirit, and in spite of the tinsel and fuss of *intellectualist* anarchism.

Appendix

The Incident of Comrade Gusev and Comrade Deutsch

This incident is closely bound up with the so-called "false" (Comrade Martov's expression) list mentioned in the letter of Comrades Martov and Starover, which has been quoted in Section J. The substance of it is as follows. Comrade Gusev informed Comrade Pavlovich that this list, consisting of Comrades Stein, Egorov, Popov, Trotsky, and Fomin, had been communicated to him, Gusev, by Comrade Deutsch (Comrade Pavlovich's *Letter*, p. 12). Comrade Deutsch accused Comrade Gusev of "deliberate calumny" on account of this statement, and a comrades' arbitration court declared Comrade Gusev's "statement" "*incorrect*" (see the court's decision in *Iskra*, No. 62). After the *editorial board* of *Iskra* had published the court decision, *Comrade Martov* (not the editorial board this time) issued a special leaflet entitled *The Decision of the Comrades' Arbitration Court*, in which he reprinted in full, not only the decision of the court, but the whole report of the proceedings, together with *a postscript of his own*. In this postscript, Comrade Martov among other things spoke of "the disgraceful fact of the forgery of a list in the interests of a factional struggle". Comrades Lyadov and Gorin, who had been delegates to the Second Congress, replied to this leaflet with one of their own entitled *An Onlooker at the Arbitration Court*, in which they "vigorously protest against Comrade Martov permitting himself to go further than the court decision and to ascribe evil motives to Comrade Gusev", where-

as the court did not find that there had been a deliberate calumny, but only that Comrade Gusev's statement was incorrect. Comrades Gorin and Lyadov explained at length that Comrade Gusev's statement might have been due to a quite natural mistake, and described as "*unworthy*" the conduct of Comrade Martov, who had himself made (and again made in his leaflet) a number of erroneous statements, arbitrarily attributing evil intent to Comrade Gusev. There could be no evil intent here at all, they said. That, if I am not mistaken, is all the "literature" on this question, which I consider it my duty to help clear up.

First of all, it is essential that the reader have a clear idea of the time and conditions in which this list (of candidates for the Central Committee) appeared. As I have already stated in this pamphlet, the *Iskra* organisation conferred during the Congress about a list of candidates for the Central Committee which it could jointly submit to the Congress. The conference ended in disagreement: the majority of the *Iskra* organisation adopted a list consisting of Travinsky, Glebov, Vasilyev, Popov, and Trotsky, but the minority refused to yield and insisted on a list consisting of Travinsky, Glebov, Fomin, Popov, and Trotsky. The two sections of the *Iskra* organisation did not meet together again after the meeting at which these lists were put forward and voted on. Both sections entered the arena of free agitation at the Congress, wishing to have the issue between them settled by a vote of the Party Congress as a whole and each trying to win as many delegates as it could to its side. This free agitation at the Congress at once revealed the political fact I have analysed in such detail in this pamphlet, namely, that in order to gain the victory over us, it was essential for the *Iskra*-ist minority (headed by Martov) to have the support of the "Centre" (the Marsh) and of the anti-*Iskra*-ists. This was essential because the vast majority of the delegates who consistently upheld the programme, tactics, and organisational plans of *Iskra* against the onslaught of the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Centre" very quickly and very staunchly took their stand on our side. Of the thirty-three delegates (or rather votes) not belonging to the anti-*Iskra*-ists or the "Centre", we very quickly won twenty-four and concluded a "direct agreement" with them,

forming a "compact majority". Comrade Martov, on the other hand, was left with only nine votes; to gain the victory, he needed all the votes of the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Centre"—with which groups he might join forces (as over Paragraph 1 of the Rules), might form a "coalition", that is, might have their support, but with which he *could not* conclude a direct agreement—could not do so because throughout the Congress he had fought these groups no less sharply than we had. Therein lay the tragicomedy of Comrade Martov's position! In his *State of Siege* Comrade Martov tries to annihilate me with the deadly venomous question: "We would respectfully request Comrade Lenin to answer explicitly—*to whom* at the Congress were the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group an outside element?" (P. 23, footnote.) I answer respectfully and explicitly: they were an outside element to Comrade Martov. And the proof is that whereas I very quickly concluded a direct agreement with the *Iskra*-ists, Comrade Martov did not conclude, and could not have concluded, a direct agreement with *Yuzhny Rabochy*, nor with Comrade Makhov, nor with Comrade Brouckère.

Only when we have got a clear idea of this political situation can we understand the "crux" of this vexed question of the celebrated "false" list. Picture to yourself the actual state of affairs: the *Iskra* organisation has split, and we are freely campaigning at the Congress, defending our respective lists. During this defence, in the host of private conversations, the lists are varied in a hundred different combinations: a committee of three is proposed instead of five; all sorts of substitutions of one candidate for another are suggested. I very well recall, for instance, that the candidatures of Comrades Rusov, Osipov, Pavlovich, and Dedov were suggested in private conversations among the majority, and then, after discussions and arguments, were withdrawn. It may very well be that other candidatures too were proposed of which I have no knowledge. In the course of these conversations each Congress delegate expressed his opinion, suggested changes, argued, and so on. It is highly unlikely that this was the case only among the majority. There is no doubt, in fact, that the same sort of thing went on among the minority, for their original five (Popov, Trotsky, Fomin, Glebov, and Travinsky) were later replaced, as we have seen from

the letter of Comrades Martov and Starover, by a trio—Glebov, Trotsky, and Popov—Glebov, moreover, not being to their taste, so that they were very ready to substitute Fomin (see the leaflet of Comrades Lyadov and Gorin). It should not be forgotten that my demarcation of the Congress delegates into the groups defined in this pamphlet was made on the basis of an analysis undertaken post factum; actually, during the election agitation these groups were only just beginning to emerge and the exchange of opinions among the delegates proceeded quite freely; no "wall" divided us, and each would speak to any delegate he wanted to discuss matters with in private. It is not at all surprising in these circumstances that among all the various combinations and lists there should appear, alongside the list of the minority of the *Iskra* organisation (Popov, Trotsky, Fomin, Glebov, and Travinsky), the not very different list: Popov, Trotsky, Fomin, Stein, and Egorov. The appearance of such a combination of candidates was very natural, because our candidates, Glebov and Travinsky, were patently not to the liking of the minority of the *Iskra* organisation (see their letter in Section J, where they remove Travinsky from the trio and expressly state that Glebov is a compromise). To replace Glebov and Travinsky by the Organising Committee members Stein and Egorov was perfectly natural, and it would have been strange if no one of the delegates belonging to the Party minority had thought of it.

Let us now examine the following two questions: 1) Who was the author of the list: Egorov, Stein, Popov, Trotsky, and Fomin? and 2) Why was Comrade Martov so profoundly incensed that such a list should be attributed to him? To give an *exact* answer to the first question, it would be necessary to question all the Congress delegates. That is now impossible. It would be necessary, in particular, to ascertain who of the delegates belonging to the Party minority (not to be confused with the *Iskra* organisation minority) had heard at the Congress of the lists that caused the split in the *Iskra* organisation; what they had thought of the respective lists of the majority and minority of the *Iskra* organisation; and whether they had not suggested or heard others suggest or express opinions about desirable changes in the list of the minority of the *Iskra* organisation. Unfortunately, these questions

do not seem to have been raised in the arbitration court either, which (to judge by the text of its decision) did not even learn over just what lists of five the *Iskra* organisation split. Comrade Belov, for example (whom I class among the "Centre"), "testified that he had been on good comradely terms with Deutsch, who used to give him his impressions of the work of the Congress, and that if Deutsch had been campaigning on behalf of any list he would have informed Belov of the fact". It is to be regretted that it was not brought out whether Comrade Deutsch gave Comrade Belov at the Congress his impressions as to the lists of the *Iskra* organisation, and if he did, what was Comrade Belov's reaction to the list of five proposed by the *Iskra* organisation minority, and whether he did not suggest or hear others suggest any desirable changes in it. Because this was not made clear, we get that contradiction in the evidence of Comrade Belov and Comrade Deutsch which has already been noted by Comrades Gorin and Lyadov, namely, that Comrade Deutsch, notwithstanding his own assertions to the contrary, did "campaign in behalf of certain Central Committee candidates" suggested by the *Iskra* organisation. Comrade Belov further testified that "he had heard about the list circulating at the Congress a couple of days before the Congress closed, in private conversation, when he met Comrades Egorov and Popov and the delegates from the Kharkov Committee. Egorov had expressed surprise that his name had been included in a list of Cenral Committee candidates, as in his, Egorov's, opinion his candidature could not inspire sympathy among the Congress delegates, whether of the majority or of the minority". It is extremely significant that the reference here is apparently to the minority *of the "Iskra" organisation,* for among the rest of the Party Congress minority the candidature of Comrade Egorov, a member of the Organising Committee and a prominent speaker of the "Centre", not only could, but in all likelihood would have been greeted sympathetically. Unfortunately, we learn nothing from Comrade Belov as to the sympathy or antipathy of those among the Party minority who did not belong to the *Iskra* organisation. And yet that is just what is important, for Comrade Deutsch waxed indignant about this list having been attributed to the minority of the *Iskra* organisation, where-

as it may have originated with the minority which did not belong to that organisation!

Of course, it is very difficult at this date to recall who first suggested this combination of candidates, and from whom each of us heard about it. I, for example, do not undertake to recall even just who among the majority first proposed the candidatures of Rusov, Dedov, and the others I have mentioned. The only thing that sticks in my memory, out of the host of conversations, suggestions, and rumours of all sorts of combinations of candidates, is those "lists" which were directly put to the vote in the *Iskra* organisation or at the private meetings of the majority. These "lists" were mostly circulated orally (in my *Letter to the Editors of "Iskra"*, p. 4, line 5 from below, it is the combination of five candidates which I orally proposed at the meeting that I call a "list"); but it also happened very often that they were jotted down in notes, such as in general passed between delegates during the sittings of the Congress and were usually destroyed after the sittings.

Since we have no exact information as to the origin of this celebrated list, it can only be assumed that the combination of candidates which we have in it was either suggested by some delegate belonging to the Party minority, without the knowledge of the *Iskra* organisation minority, and thereafter began to circulate at the Congress in spoken and written form; or else that this combination was suggested at the Congress by some member of the *Iskra* organisation minority who subsequently forgot about it. The latter assumption seems to me the more likely one, for the following reasons: already at the Congress the *Iskra* organisation minority were *undoubtedly* sympathetic towards the candidature of Comrade Stein (see present pamphlet); and as to the candidature of Comrade Egorov, *this* minority did undoubtedly arrive at the idea after the Congress (for both at the League Congress and in *State of Siege* regret was expressed that the Organising Committee had not been endorsed as the Central Committee—and Comrade Egorov was a member of the Organising Committee). Is it then not natural to assume that this idea, which was evidently in the air, of converting the members of the Organising Committee into members of the Central Committee was voiced by

some member of the minority in private conversation at the Party Congress too?

But instead of a natural explanation, Comrade Martov and Comrade Deutsch are determined to see here something *sordid*—a plot, a piece of dishonesty, the dissemination of "*deliberately* false rumours *with the object* of defaming", a "*forgery in the interests of a factional struggle*", and so forth. This morbid urge can only be explained by the unwholesome conditions of émigré life, or by an abnormal nervous condition, and I would not even have taken the question up if matters had not gone to the length of an unworthy attack upon a comrade's honour. Just think: what grounds could Comrades Deutsch and Martov have had for detecting a sordid, evil intent in an incorrect statement, in an incorrect rumour? The picture which their morbid imaginations conjured up was apparently that the majority "defamed" them, not by pointing to the minority's political mistake (Paragraph 1 and the coalition with the opportunists), but by ascribing to the minority "deliberately false" and "forged" lists. The minority preferred to attribute the matter not to their own mistake, but to sordid, dishonest, and disgraceful practices on the part of the majority! How irrational it was to seek for evil intent in the "incorrect statement", we have already shown above, by describing the circumstances. It was clearly realised by the comrades' arbitration court too, which did not find any calumny, or any evil intent, or anything disgraceful. Lastly, it is most clearly proved by the fact that at the Party Congress itself, prior to the elections, the minority of the *Iskra* organisation entered into discussions with the majority regarding this false rumour, and Comrade Martov even stated his views in a letter which was read at a meeting of all the twenty-four delegates of the majority! It never even occurred to the majority to conceal from the minority of the *Iskra* organisation that such a list was circulating at the Congress: Comrade Lensky told Comrade Deutsch about it (see the court decision); Comrade Plekhanov spoke of it to Comrade Zasulich ("You can't talk to her, she seems to take me for Trepov,"[50] Comrade Plekhanov said to me, and this joke, repeated many times after, is one more indication of the abnormal state of excitement the minority were in); and I informed Comrade

Martov that his assurance (that the list was not his, Martov's) was quite enough for me (League Minutes, p. 64). Comrade Martov (together with Comrade Starover, if I remember rightly) thereupon sent a note to us on the Bureau which ran roughly as follows: "The majority of the *Iskra* editorial board request to be allowed to attend the private meeting of the majority in order to refute the defamatory rumours which are being circulated about them." Plekhanov and I replied on the same slip of paper, saying: "We have not heard any defamatory rumours. If a meeting of the editorial board is required, that should be arranged separately. Lenin, Plekhanov." At the meeting of the majority held that evening, we related this to all the twenty-four delegates. To preclude all possible misunderstanding, it was decided to elect delegates from all the twenty-four of us jointly and send them to talk it over with Comrades Martov and Starover. The delegates elected, Comrades Sorokin and Sablina, went and explained that nobody was specifically attributing the list to Martov or Starover, particularly after their statement, and that it was of absolutely no importance whether this list originated with the minority of the *Iskra* organisation or with the Congress minority not belonging to that organisation. After all, we could not start an investigation at the Congress and question all the delegates about this list! But Comrades Martov and Starover, not content with this, sent us a letter containing a formal denial (see Section J). This letter was read out by our representatives, Comrades Sorokin and Sablina, at a meeting of the twenty-four. It might have seemed that the incident could be considered closed—not in the sense that the origin of the list had been ascertained (if anybody cared about that), but in the sense that the idea had been completely dispelled that there was any intention of "injuring the minority", or of "defaming" anybody, or of resorting to a "forgery in the interests of a factional struggle". Yet at the League Congress (pp. 63-64) Comrade Martov again brought forth this sordid story conjured up by a morbid imagination, and, what is more, made a number of *incorrect statements* (evidently due to his wrought-up condition). He said that the list included a Bundist. That was untrue. All the witnesses in the arbitration court, including Comrades Stein and Belov, de-

clared that the list had Comrade Egorov in it. Comrade Martov said that the list implied a coalition in the sense of a direct agreement. That was untrue, as I have already explained. Comrade Martov said that there were no other lists originating with the minority of the *Iskra* organisation (and likely to repel the majority of the Congress from this minority), "not even forged ones". That was untrue, for the entire majority at the Party Congress knew of no less than three lists which originated with Comrade Martov and Co., and which did not meet with the approval of the majority (see the leaflet by Lyadov and Gorin).

Why, in general, was Comrade Martov so incensed by this list? Because it signified a swing towards the Right wing of the Party. At that time Comrade Martov cried out against a "false accusation of opportunism" and expressed indignation at the "misrepresentation of his political position"; but now everybody can see that the question whether this list belonged to Comrade Martov and Comrade Deutsch could have had no political significance whatever, and that *essentially, apart from this or any other list*, the accusation was not false, but true, and the characterisation of his political position absolutely correct.

The upshot of this painful and artificial affair of the celebrated false list is as follows:

1) One cannot but join Comrades Gorin and Lyadov in describing as unworthy Comrade Martov's attempt to asperse Comrade Gusev's honour by crying about a "disgraceful fact of the forgery of a list in the interests of a factional struggle".

2) With the object of creating a healthier atmosphere and of sparing Party members the necessity of taking every morbid extravagance seriously, it would perhaps be advisable at the Third Congress to adopt a rule such as is contained in the Rules of Organisation of the German Social-Democratic Labour Party. Paragraph 2 of these Rules runs: "No person can belong to the Party who is guilty of a gross violation of the principles of the Party programme or of dishonourable conduct. The question of continued membership in the Party shall be decided by a court of arbitration convened by the Party Executive. One half of the judges shall be nominated by the person demanding the expulsion, the other half by the person

whose expulsion is demanded; the chairman shall be appointed by the Party Executive. An appeal against a decision of the court of arbitration may be made to the Control Commission or to the Party Congress." Such a rule might serve as a good weapon against all who frivolously level accusations (or spread rumours) of dishonourable conduct. If there were such a rule, all such accusations would once and for all be classed as indecent slanders unless their author had the moral courage to come forward *before the Party* in the role of accuser and seek for a verdict from the competent Party institution.

Written in February-May 1904
Published in book form
in Geneva, May 1904

NOTES

[1] Lenin devoted several months to the writing of *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* (*The Crisis in Our Party*), making a careful study of the minutes and resolutions of the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., of the speeches of each of the delegates and the political groupings which took shape at the Congress and of the Central Committee and Party Council documents. In this work treating questions of organisation Lenin dealt a crushing blow to Menshevik opportunism. The historic significance of the book lies in the fact that in it Lenin developed the Marxist teaching on the Party, elaborated the organisational principles of the proletarian revolutionary Party and for the first time in the history of Marxism gave an exhaustive criticism of organisational opportunism showing how dangerous it is to underestimate the importance of organisation for the working-class movement.

The book gave rise to furious attacks from the Mensheviks. Plekhanov demanded that the Central Committee disassociate itself from it. The conciliators on the Central Committee tried to prevent its publication and circulation.

Despite the opportunists' attempts, *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* was widely circulated among advanced workers in Russia. According to the police department, copies of the book were found during arrests and house-searches in Moscow, Petersburg, Kiev, Riga, Saratov, Tula, Orel, Ufa, Perm, Kostroma, Shchigri, Shavli (Kovno Gubernia) and elsewhere.

One Step Forward, Two Steps Back was republished by Lenin in 1907 in the collection *Twelve Years* (on the title page the year 1908 appeared).

The present edition contains the full text as originally published in 1904, checked with Lenin's manuscript, and all the additions made by the author in 1907.

Title page

[2] "*Practical Worker*"—pseudonym of the Menshevik M. S. Makadzyub, also referred to as Panin.

p. 11

[3] *Iskra* (The Spark) was the first all-Russia illegal Marxist newspaper. It was founded abroad by Lenin in December 1900 and secretly delivered to Russia where it played a vital role in the ideological rallying of the Russian Social-Democrats and the preparation for the unification of disunited local organisations in the revolutionary Marxist Party. After the split between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks that took place at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903, *Iskra* passed into the hands of the Mensheviks (from No. 52) and began to be called the *new Iskra* as distinct from the Leninist *old Iskra*.

p. 11

[4] The *Conference of 1902* was a conference of representatives of R.S.D.L.P. committees and organisations held on March 23-28 (April 5-10), 1902, in Belostok. The Economists and Bundists who supported them intended to turn the conference into the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. hoping in this way to strengthen their positions in the Russian Social-Democracy and paralyse *Iskra*'s growing influence. However, this attempt failed owing to both the comparably narrow composition of the conference (only four R.S.D.L.P. organisations from among those functioning in Russia were represented) and serious fundamental differences that came to light at the conference. In particular, an *Iskra* delegate sharply objected to the turning of the conference into a Party Congress, attempting to demonstrate the incompetence and unpreparedness of such a congress. The conference set up an Organising Committee to convene the Second Party Congress, but soon afterwards the majority of its delegates, including two members of the Organising Committee, were arrested by the police. A new Organising Committee to convene the Second R.S.D.L.P. Congress was formed in November 1902 in Pskov at a conference of the representatives of the Petersburg R.S.D.L.P. committee, the *Iskra* organisation in Russia and the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group.

p. 11

[5] *Bund* ("General Jewish Workers' Union of Lithuania, Poland and Russia"), formed at the Inaugural Congress of Jewish Social-Democratic groups held in Wilno in 1897, was an association mainly of semi-proletarian Jewish artisans in Russia's western regions. At the first Party Congress (1898) the Bund joined the R.S.D.L.P. "as an autonomous organisation independent only in regard to questions specifically concerning the Jewish proletariat".

The Bund was a vehicle of nationalism and separatism within the Russian working-class movement.

After the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. rejected its demand to be recognised as the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat, the Bund withdrew from the Party. It rejoined in 1906, on the basis of a decision of the Fourth (Unity) Party Congress.

Within the Party the Bundists always supported the opportunist wing (the Economists, the Mensheviks, the liquidators) and waged a struggle against the Bolsheviks and Bolshevism.

p. 13

[6] *Rabocheye Dyelo* (Workers' Cause) was an Economist journal, organ of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad, published at irregular intervals in Geneva from April 1899 to February 1902; 12 issues (nine books) appeared in all. *Rabocheye Dyelo* supported the Bernsteinian slogan of "freedom of criticism" of Marxism, took an opportunist stand on the tactical and organisational problems of the Russian Social-Democratic movement, denied the revolutionary potentialities of the peasantry, etc. The *Rabocheye Dyelo* group propagated the opportunist idea of subordinating the workers' political struggle to the economic, kowtowed to spontaneity in the working-class movement and denied the leading role of the Party. At the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists represented the extreme Right, opportunist wing of the Party.

p. 13

[7] *Yuzhny Rabochy* (Southern Worker) was a Social-Democratic group formed in the south of Russia in the autumn of 1900 around an illegal newspaper of that name.

Unlike the Economists the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group considered the proletariat's political struggle and the overthrow of autocracy to be the prime task. They opposed terrorism, upheld the need to develop a mass revolutionary movement and carried out extensive revolutionary activities in the south of Russia. At the same time, they overestimated the role of the liberal bourgeoisie and ignored the importance of the peasant movement. In contradistinction to the *Iskra* plan of building a centralised Marxist Party by uniting all revolutionary Social-Democrats around *Iskra*, the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group put forward the plan of restoring the Party by creating regional Social-Democratic associations. A practical attempt to carry out this plan was made through convening, in December 1901, a conference of the Party committees and organisations of the south of Russia, at which a League of Southern Committees and Organisations of the R.S.D.L.P. was formed with *Yuzhny Rabochy* as its press organ. This attempt, however, proved impracticable (as was the group's whole organisational plan) and following wholesale arrests in the spring of 1902 the League collapsed. In August 1902 the *Yuzhny Rabochy* members who remained at liberty began negotiations with the *Iskra* editorial board about joint efforts to restore the unity of Russian Social-Democracy. The group's statement of solidarity with *Iskra* was of considerable importance in consolidating Russia's Social-Democratic forces. In November 1902, the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group joined the *Iskra* organisation in Russia, the St. Petersburg Committee and the Northern League of the R.S.D.L.P. to establish the Organising Committee to convene the Second Party Congress and subsequently took part in that committee's work. However, even at that period the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group failed to take a consistent revolutionary stand.

The Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. voted to dissolve the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group as well as all other separate, independent Social-Democratic groups and organisations.

p. 13

[8] The *League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad* was formed in October 1901 on Lenin's initiative. Its task was to disseminate the ideas of revolutionary Social-Democracy and help to build a militant Social-Democratic organisation. According to its Rules, the League was *Iskra*'s foreign section. It recruited supporters for *Iskra* among Russian Social-Democrats living abroad, gave the paper material support, organised its delivery to Russia and published popular Marxist literature. The Second Party Congress endorsed the League as the sole Party organisation abroad with the status of a Party committee, and laid down that it should work under the Central Committee's guidance and control.

After the Second Party Congress the Mensheviks entrenched themselves in the League and waged a struggle against Lenin and the Bolsheviks. At the Second Congress of the League in October 1903, the Mensheviks adopted new League Rules that ran counter to the Party Rules adopted at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. From that time on the League was a bulwark of Menshevism; it existed till 1905.

p. 14

[9] The *Borba* (Struggle) group came into being in Paris in the summer of 1900. It was led by D. B. Ryazanov, Y. M. Steklov and E. L. Gurevich. The group adopted its name in May 1901. The Borba group distorted Marxist revolutionary theory interpreting it in a doctrinaire and scholastic spirit and adopted a hostile attitude towards Lenin's organisational principles of party-building. Since it departed from Social-Democratic views and tactics, engaged in disorganising activities and had no contact with Social-Democratic organisations in Russia, the group was not allowed representation at the Second Congress. It was dissolved by decision of that Congress.

p. 19

[10] Pavlovich, *Letter to the Comrades on the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.*, Geneva, 1904.

p. 19

[11] *Rabochaya Mysl* (Workers' Thought) was an Economist group which published a paper under the same name. The paper appeared from October 1897 to December 1902; 16 issues were published in all.

Rabochaya Mysl advocated frankly opportunist views. It opposed political struggle and restricted the tasks of the working-class movement to "the interests of the moment", to pressing for individual minor reforms, chiefly of an economic nature. Upholding "spontaneity" in the movement, it opposed the creation of an independent proletarian party and belittled the importance of revolutionary theory and consciousness, maintaining that socialist ideology could grow out of a spontaneous movement.

p. 27

[12] In the supplement to *Iskra* No. 57, January 15, 1904, the Menshevik *Iskra* editorial board published an article by the ex-

Economist A. Martynov in which he opposed the organisational principles of Bolshevism and attacked Lenin. In the note to Martynov's article the *Iskra* editorial board made a formal reservation with regard to some of the author's ideas but approved of the article on the whole and agreed with Martynov's main propositions.

p. 29

[13] *Otrezki* (cut-off lands) were the portions of land taken by the landowners from the peasants when serfdom was abolished in Russia in 1861.

p. 37

[14] This refers to the general redistribution of all the land (*chorny peredel*)—one of the slogans widespread among the peasantry of tsarist Russia.

p. 39

[15] *Jaurèsism*—a political trend named after the French socialist Jean Jaurès who led the Right reformist wing in the French Socialist Party. Under the guise of the demand "freedom of criticism", the Jaurèsists attempted to revise basic Marxist propositions and advocated class collaboration with the bourgeoisie.

p. 56

[16] *Zemlya i Volya* (Land and Freedom) was a revolutionary Narodnik organisation formed in St. Petersburg in the autumn of 1876. Although it did not renounce socialism as the ultimate goal, Zemlya i Volya put forward as the immediate aim the satisfaction of "the people's demands and desires as they are at the moment", namely, the demand for "land and freedom".

For the purpose of agitation among the peasantry, members of the organisation set up rural "settlements", chiefly in the agricultural regions along the Volga and in the fertile central part of Russia. They also carried on agitation among the workers and students. Although it maintained contacts with some of the workers' circles, Zemlya i Volya could not lead the working-class movement, since like other Narodnik groupings it denied the vanguard role of the working class. Nor did it understand the importance of political struggle, which in its view only deflected the revolutionaries' energies from the true path and might weaken their ties with the people.

Unlike the Narodnik groups of the early seventies, Zemlya i Volya built up a close-knit organisation, based on principles of strict centralisation and discipline.

By 1879, when their socialist agitation among the peasants was having little effect and government persecution was increasing, the majority of the members began to turn to political terrorism as the principal means of achieving their ends. There were sharp disagreements over this, and in June 1879 Zemlya i Volya split into two: the adherents of the former tactics (headed by Plekhanov) formed an organisation called Chorny Peredel (General Redistribution), while the advocates of terrorism

(A. I. Zhelyabov and others) founded Narodnaya Volya (People's Will).

p. 58

[17] *Narodnaya Volya* (People's Will)—the secret political organisation of the terrorist Narodniks formed in August 1879 after the split in Zemlya i Volya. While still adhering to the Narodnik utopian-socialist ideas, Narodnaya Volya also advocated political struggle, regarding the overthrow of the autocracy and the achievement of political freedom as its major aim. Its programme envisaged a "permanent popular representative body" elected by universal suffrage, the proclamation of democratic liberties, the transfer of the land to the people, and the elaboration of measures designed to hand the factories over to the workers.

Narodnaya Volya fought heroically against tsarist autocracy. But, following the erroneous theory of "active" heroes and a "passive" mass, the organisation hoped to achieve the remoulding of society without the participation of the people, through its own efforts, through individual terrorism designed to intimidate and disorganise the government. After the assassination of Alexander II on March 1, 1881, the government was able, by savage reprisals, death sentences, and acts of provocation, to put an end to its existence.

p. 58

[18] *Manilovism* (from the name of Manilov in Gogol's *Dead Souls*)—smug complacency, empty sentimental daydreaming, unprincipled philistinism.

p. 60

[19] This refers to an incident which took place in Hamburg in 1900 in connection with the conduct of 122 bricklayers, members of the Free Bricklayers' Union, who performed piece-work during a strike, in violation of the instructions of the trade-union leadership. The Hamburg Bricklayers' Union brought up the question about the strike-breaking activities of the Social-Democrat members of the group at meetings of local party organisations, to which they were affiliated; these organisations in their turn referred the matter to the Central Committee of the German Social-Democratic Party. A party court of arbitration appointed by the Central Committee condemned the conduct of these Social-Democrats but turned down the proposal for their expulsion from the Party.

p. 64

[20] The Congress rejected S. Zborovsky's (Kostich's) resolution which formulated § 1 of the Party's Rules in the following words: "Anyone who recognises the Party Programme and renders it material support and personally helps it under the guidance of one of the Party organisations, is regarded by the latter as a Party member."

p. 68

[21] At the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. there were 16 *Iskra* members, nine of whom formed a majority under Lenin's leadership.

p. 79

[22] *Ivan Ivanovich* and *Ivan Nikiforovich*—characters from N. Gogol's *Tale of How Ivan Ivanovich Quarrelled with Ivan Nikiforovich.*

p. 81

[23] *Augean stables*—according to Greek mythology, vast filthy stables belonging to Augeus, king of Ellada, that were cleaned by Hercules, who performed this feat during one day. The expression Augean stables is synonymous with vast quantities of rubbish and filth or extreme neglect and disorder in public affairs or business.

p. 81

[24] The Congress of the German Social-Democratic Party was held in Breslau, on October 6-12, 1895. The Congress focussed its attention on the discussion of the draft agrarian programme proposed by the agrarian commission which was formed in accordance with the decision of the Frankfurt Congress in 1894. The draft agrarian programme contained serious mistakes, in particular, reflected a tendency to attempt to turn the proletarian party into a party of the "whole people". Apart from opportunists, this draft was also defended by A. Bebel and W. Liebknecht, for which they were condemned by their Party comrades at the 1895 Congress.

p. 85

[25] These are Margareta's words from Goethe's *Faust* (Margareta reprimands Faust for his friendship with Mephistopheles) which Clara Zetkin quoted by memory in her speech at the German Social-Democratic congress.

p. 86

[26] *Arakcheyev A. A.*—reactionary Russian statesman at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century, whose name is associated with a period of unbridled police tyranny and jackboot law.

p. 92

[27] *Osvobozhdeniye*—a fortnightly of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie published abroad in 1902-05 under the editorship of Pyotr Struve. Subsequently the Osvobozhdeniye group was to form the nucleus of the Cadets—the main bourgeois party in Russia.

p. 128

[28] Lenin is referring here to a speech made by the Economist Akimov at the Second R.S.D.L.P. Congress. One of Akimov's objections to the *Iskra* draft programme was that it did not mention the word "proletariat" in the nominative case, but only in the genitive ("party of the proletariat"). This, Akimov claimed, showed a tendency to exalt the party above the proletariat.

p. 132

[29] *Mountain and Gironde*—the two political groups of the bourgeoisie during the French bourgeois revolution at the close of the eighteenth century. Montagnards, or Jacobins, was the name given to the more resolute representatives of the bourgeoisie, the revolutionary class of the time, which stood for the abolition of absolutism and feudal system. The Girondists, on the other hand,

vacillated between revolution and counter-revolution and their policy was one of compromise with the monarchy.

Lenin applied the term "Socialist Gironde" to the opportunist trend in the Social-Democratic movement, and the term "Mountain", or proletarian Jacobins, to the revolutionary Social-Democrats.

p. 141

[30] The *Voronezh Committee* and the *St. Petersburg "Workers' Organisation"* were in the hands of the Economists and were hostile to Lenin's *Iskra* and its organisational plan for building a Marxist party.

p. 142

[31] This new member of the Central Committee was Friedrich Lengnik who came from Russia to Geneva in September 1903.

p. 150

[32] *Zarya* (Dawn)—a Marxist scientific and political journal published in Stuttgart in 1901-02 by the *Iskra* editorial board.

p. 151

[33] Probably two suburbs of Geneva, Carouge and Cluse, where the supporters of both the Majority and the Minority lived.

p. 166

[34] *Sobakevich*—a character in N. Gogol's *Dead Souls*. p. 167

[35] *Orthodox*—pseudonym used by the Menshevik Lyubov Axelrod.

p. 167

[36] *Bazarov*—the main character in Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*.

p. 170

[37] Together with Lenin's "Letter to *Iskra*" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 7, pp. 115-18), *Iskra* No. 53 (November 25, 1903) printed an editorial reply by Plekhanov. In his letter Lenin proposed a discussion in the paper of the differences of principle between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. Plekhanov rejected this, describing these differences as "petty squabbling typical of theoretical politics".

p. 170

[38] *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* (Revolutionary Russia) was an illegal Socialist-Revolutionary newspaper first published in Russia by the Union of Socialist Revolutionaries at the end of 1900. From January 1902 till December 1905, it was issued abroad (Geneva) as the official organ of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party.

p. 170

[39] *The Central Committee's Ultimatum* to the Mensheviks was announced on November 12 (25), 1903. On October 22 (November 4), 1903, Lenin sent the Central Committee a letter in which he proposed offering the Mensheviks the following conditions: 1) co-option of three of the ex-editors on to the editorial board of the Central Organ; 2) re-establishment of the status quo in the League

Abroad; 3) allowing the Mensheviks one seat in the Party Council. These initial conditions were not supported by conciliationist members of the Central Committee. In the letter Lenin outlined and proposed approving the main points of an ultimatum (i.e., a statement of the practical concessions the Central Committee was permitted to make to them) but delaying as yet their presentation: 1) co-option of four ex-editors to the editorial board; 2) co-option to the Central Committee of two members of the opposition to be chosen by the Central Committee; 3) re-establishment of the status quo in the League Abroad; 4) allowing the Mensheviks one seat in the Party Council. "If the ultimatum is not accepted," Lenin whote, "it will mean war to the bitter end. An additional condition: 5) the cessation of all gossip, wrangling and talk concerning the strife at the Second Party Congress and after it." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 34, p. 187.) These proposals of Lenin's (except the additional condition) were somewhat toned down by the conciliators among the Central Committee members.

The day after the ultimatum, the Mensheviks, helped a great deal by Plekhanov, co-opted the ex-editors to the Central Organ editorial board, rejected the Central Committee's ultimatum and embarked on the path of open struggle against the Party majority.

p. 172

[40] *Y*—pseudonym of L. I. Galperin, a Central Organ delegate to the Party Council, afterwards co-opted to the Central Committee; he took up a conciliatory stand.

p. 173

[41] This reference is to the views of Pyotr Struve, leading representative of "legal Marxism" and his book *Critical Remarks on the Subject of Russia's Economic Development* (1894). In this early work Struve's bourgeois-apologetic thinking had been clearly discernible. The views of Struve and the other "legal Marxists" were assailed by Lenin in a paper read to a St. Petersburg Marxist circle in the autumn of 1894, entitled "The Reflection of Marxism in Bourgeois Literature". This paper Lenin then expanded at the close of 1894 and the beginning of 1895, into his essay "The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 333-507).

p. 177

[42] Lenin is referring to Martov's *Iskra* article "Is This the Way To Prepare?", in which Martov opposed preparations for an all-Russia armed uprising, regarding them as nothing but utopian conspiracy.

p. 179

[43] A line from the satirical "Hymn of the Contemporary Russian Socialist" published in No. 1 of *Zarya* (April 1901) and ridiculing the Economists in their attempts to adapt their tactics to the spontaneous movement. This "Hymn" which was written by Martov appeared under the name of Narcis Tuporylov (Narcissus Blunt-Snout).

p. 186

[44] *Oblomov*—a landowner, the main character in Goncharov's novel of the same name, an embodiment of sloth and passive vegetation.

p. 188

[45] The *Dresden Congress of the German Social-Democratic Party* was held on September 13-20, 1903. The Congress concentrated on the questions of Party tactics and the struggle against revisionism. It levelled criticism at the revisionist views held by E. Bernstein, P. Göhre, E. David, W. Heine and other German Social-Democrats. However in its struggle against revisionism the Congress was not consistent enough: the revisionists were not expelled from the Party and after the Congress they continued preaching their opportunist views.

p. 193

[46] The *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (Socialist Monthly), published in Berlin from 1897 to 1933, was the chief organ of the opportunists in the German Social-Democratic Party and one of the organs of international opportunism.

p. 193

[47] The *Frankfurter Zeitung* (Frankfurt Newspaper) was a daily newspaper, organ of the major German stock-jobbers, which was published in Frankfurt-on-Main from 1856 to 1943. It re-appeared in 1949 as the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and is now the mouthpiece of West German monopolies.

p. 198

[48] "*Ministerial*" tactics, "ministerialism", "ministerial socialism" (or Millerandism)—the opportunist tactics of participation by Socialists in reactionary bourgeois governments. The term originated when in 1899 the French socialist Millerand joined the bourgeois government of Waldeck-Rousseau.

p. 200

[49] Lenin is referring here to the satirical Short Constitution of the R.S.D.L.P. written by L. Martov and published as an appendix to his article "Who's Next" (*Iskra*, No. 58, January 25, 1904). In his constitution Martov spoke ironically about Bolshevik organisational principles and complained about allegedly unjust attitudes towards the Mensheviks. By "bullies" and "bullied" he refers here to Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

p. 202

[50] *Trepov, F. F.*—Governor of St. Petersburg, whom Vera Zasulich fired at in 1878 in protest against his maltreatment of the political prisoner Bogolyubov.

p. 217

REQUEST TO READERS

Progress Publishers would be glad to have your opinion of the translation and design of this book.

Please send all your suggestions to 21, Zubovsky Boulevard, Moscow, U.S.S.R.

ಗ್ರಂಥಾಲಯ
ಕನ್ನಡ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ – ಹಂಪಿ
ವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯ

ವರ್ಗೀಕರಣ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : 329.947 LEN

ಪರಿಗ್ರಹಣ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : 107831

ಪುಸ್ತಕವನ್ನು ಕೊನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಮೂದಿಸಲಾಗಿರುವ ದಿನದಂದು ಅಥವಾ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಮುನ್ನ ಹಿಂದಿರುಗಿಸಬೇಕು. ತಡವಾದ ಪ್ರತಿದಿನಕ್ಕೆ ನಿಯಮಾನುಸಾರ ದಂಡ ಶುಲ್ಕ ವಿಧಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

В. И. ЛЕНИН

ШАГ ВПЕРЕД, ДВА ШАГА НАЗАД

На английском языке